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The Week

STRIKES or threatened strikes all over the country and in numerous basic industries indicate that the workers are gathering to establish the advances first promised them through the N.I.R.A. and then compromised in face of the opposition of great employers. The Fisher Body plant of General Motors is idle as the result of a virtually 100-percent walkout of the unionized workers, who demand genuine collective bargaining, the reinstatement of men discharged for union activities, and certain improvements in wages and conditions of work. The controversy may spread to other motor plants. Longshoremen and stevedores are tying up shipping on the West Coast, in New Orleans and in New York. Here again the issue is collective bargaining. The great Pratt and Whitney aircraft plant in Hartford is on strike. Trouble is threatened in the Mesabi iron range—the chief source of ore for the steel industry. And even in the steel mills themselves, which, together with the automobile plants, constitute the heart of industrial capital-

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these are true rank-and-file movements. When the old union leaders will lead, the workers will follow; when they will not, the workers go ahead anyway. They are tired of waiting for Washington to give them the promised new deal, and are trying to enforce it through their own power—which is the only way they will ever get it.

ON May 21, 220 lodges of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, representing approximately a quarter of a million men in the steel industry, will simultaneously present to steel employers formal demands for recognition of their union, the check-off of union dues and the six-hour day with pay equivalent to that received for eight hours in July, 1929. If the demands are not granted within a reasonable time, a strike, which leaders are confident will tie up the entire industry, will probably be called sometime in June. The unique feature of this plan is that it is entirely in the hands of the younger and comparatively new element in the Amalgamated. Mike Tighe, seventy-five-year-old international president of the Iron, Steel and Tin Workers' union, is entirely out of sympathy with this move and it is expected that if the strike is actually called he will outlaw it. This does not, it is reported, in the least concern the Committee of Ten that is in active charge. This committee comprises the presidents of the ten steel districts in the country and the progressive bloc that is tired of "dilly-dallying" and wants to see "things happen." At the Carnegie Steel Works, Duquesne, Pennsylvania, a bulletin has been posted announcing that a banquet will be held for the workers on the evening of May 21—the very day on which the demands are to be submitted. The steel companies are also distributing free literature containing their testimony against the Wagner Bill and in favor of company unions. But, according to our informants, the men are in no mood to be deceived.

THE severe drought in the wheat regions, unless it is unexpectedly alleviated in the near future, will undoubtedly reduce the supply and raise the price of wheat. This will be disastrous to those whose crops are destroyed, however much it may benefit everyone who has wheat to sell. The only diffe-

tic-allotment plan is that in this instance the work is done by a natural calamity instead of by collective action, and the benefits and injuries are inequitably distributed instead of being handed out proportionately to all concerned. If prices must be raised by crop restriction, the human intervention is greatly to be preferred. Perhaps, in order to correct the effect of what has happened, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration ought to say to the wheat farmers: Nature has done our restricting for us; the price of wheat will be higher this year, and the benefit payments will not be necessary for those whose crop is normal. Will you consent to their being distributed in proportion to the amount of crop failure suffered by each farmer, instead of according to the agreed allotments?

NOTHING more damaging to the prestige of the Roosevelt administration has occurred than the failure of the Senate to confirm the appointment of Dr. Willard Thorp as director of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. Dr. Thorp's appointment was the culmination of a long search for a man competent to fill this responsible post. He was called from his academic position at the personal solicitation of the President, because he was an outstanding authority on business statistics. The failure of the Senate to confirm him was due entirely to the disappointment of partisan patronage hunters; Dr. Thorp, though fitted in every way for the post, was not a deserving Democrat. Just as culpable as the Democratic Senators was the President, who failed to exercise pressure to back the man selected. Farleyism has in this instance won a signal victory. Though on other grounds we have differed with Assistant Secretary Dickinson, in this case we honor his indignant protest.

AT LAST the long awaited measure to stimulate the construction industry has been sent to Congress by the President. This, it should be clearly understood, is not a housing measure as housing is understood today. It makes no provision for large-scale building to care for those in the lower income groups. It involves no aspects of planning, whether of particular housing projects or of larger units. It is merely an effort to attract private capital into the financing of an old-fashioned residential building boom, to repair and build individual houses for the strictly limited class that can afford them. Chief among its provisions are long-term loans up to $2,000 for modernization and improvement of houses, federal guarantee of home mortgages both new and old, encouragement of the organization of mortgage associations to provide financing for home builders, and insurance of the shares of building and loan associations. The object of each of these measures is to loosen up the market for mortgage money so that those who can afford to borrow may find lenders. If this could be done, there would result a certain stimulation of the construction indus-

country. Conservatives should note that this is a plan aimed strictly at recovery, and that it involves no element of reform whatever. In it the government does its best to act as a big brother to traditional private capitalism. And conservatives will, we suppose, be pleased by the fact that since it aims only at recovery, its ultimate result, even if it is successful, will be to contribute to the making of another depression.

FROM the weekly statement of reporting member banks of the Reserve System, in ninety-one leading cities of the United States, we abstract the following little table, showing the changes in certain items between May 2, 1934, and May 3, 1933 (figures in millions of dollars):

		Change
Loans on securities.....	3,577	— 121
All other loans.....	4,559	— 147
Investments in U. S. government bonds...	6,255	+1,346
Reserves	2,588	+1,124
Deposits		
Demand	12,221	+1,873
Time	4,454	+ 124
Government	1,055	+ 797

The illusion of financial health in the figures for demand deposits, increased by nearly two billions in a year, cannot conceal the dangerous trends shown in the table. In the first place, the total of demand and time deposits at the moment is actually less than it was in the spring of 1932 (which was certainly no glowing period of fiscal well being). But what of the other side of the ledger? Loans on securities are off $121,000,000 for the year. (These are by no means all for margin gambling; many firms finance their current needs by borrowing on securities in their possession.) "All other" loans, chiefly commercial paper, the financial life blood of commerce, are off $147,000,000 from a year ago, off more than *two billions* from April, 1932, and off $3,400,000,000 from April, 1931. Against this the increases are in two places only, investments in government bonds and excess reserves. Spending government money has its consequences, but the paper bond held by the bank means nothing in itself. Excess reserves are, if possible, even more idle so far as commerce is concerned. What has happened is essentially simple. The government has spent vast sums. The receipts for those sums, the bonds, are in the hands of the banks and show in the table. The money itself, the purchasing power put out by government spending, has promptly flowed back to the banks, which, having no use for it, keep it in the form of excess reserves, there to appear again in the table. The circle is closed, the government's money has stopped flowing.

WITH the adoption of a new corporative constitution by the Christian Social rump parliament and the amalgamation of all bourgeois parties in the

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the organization of her fascist state. Within its framework whatever remains to be done in the management of the nation's affairs will be a matter of administration by Cabinet decrees. As in Italy, a small group of politicians, purporting to act in the name of a party, will henceforth direct the business of the country—with this difference, to be sure, that Mussolini is a powerful personality who holds the reins of Italy firmly in his grasp, while Austria is ruled by a triumvirate of would-be dictators not one of whom boasts more than average ability or personality. To a great extent, this lack of leadership in Dollfuss, von Starhemberg and Fey is offset by the power invested in the Catholic Church under a concordat between Austria and the Vatican. Under its provisions, Catholicism in Austria enjoys rights and privileges greater than in any nation in the world, Italy not excepted. It will have undisputed jurisdiction over all education and is the only institution in the land that may organize its own groups and associations free from the control of the state. Marriages between Catholics will be held illegal unless consecrated by the Church. The Church may use the machinery of the state to levy taxes and assessments. Not only are these guaranteed by the state but the state will likewise contribute toward the expense of the Church, church schools, seminaries and clergy. The Austrian federal state has become a second Vatican City on a national scale.

AMONG American newspaper correspondents in Berlin none is in more intimate contact with the leaders of the Nazi government than the Hearst correspondent Karl von Wiegand. Coming from him, therefore, the news that President von Hindenburg is ill and that Hitler will probably add the responsibilities of the Reich presidency to his duties as Chancellor assumes quasi-official character. No less important is his intimation that Göring, under this arrangement, would become the new Vice-Chancellor, for Göring is the representative of the conservative industrialist wing of the National Socialist party. He has always remained in close touch with the German Nationalist Junkers. For months past it has been rumored that the Prussian Premier is fading out of the picture, and is about to be deprived of all government authority. These rumors had their origin in Göring's well known anti-social attitude and his personal rivalry with the Chancellor, with whom he shares chiefly an inordinate appetite for public acclaim.

THERE are important reasons, of course, behind the choice of the vain Göring for this position in place of von Papen, who will be relegated to some diplomatic post. Much more than the rebellious workers, the Nazi leaders fear the deluded and disappointed middle class and the proletarian elements in the Storm Troops. It may prove necessary in the long run to rely more firmly on the support of the Reichswehr. Not long ago the swastika was made the official insignia of the German army and all recruits are required to undergo a course in National Socialist instruction. But the aristocratic officers' corps still refuses to be classed with the brown and black Hitler guards. With Reichspresident Hitler as the official commander-in-chief of the army and navy and General Göring, the ex-leader of the famous Richthofen air squadron and holder of the highest decoration in the gift of the Hohenzollern imperial government, as the idol and hero of the army, the Nazi regime feels that it can face the future with something approaching equanimity.

CHICAGO, which demonstrated its loyalty to public-school teachers by failing for months to pay them for their services, and which in turn saw their loyalty demonstrated when they continued to work faithfully without pay, is now insulting them by supporting a bill before the Illinois legislature to require them to take an oath of loyalty to the Constitution and the government. "There is an obligation upon every citizen," announces Mayor Kelly, "to do everything in his power to maintain the established order under which he finds liberty and protection." We heartily agree both with this and with its logical converse—there is an obligation upon every citizen to do everything in his power to change the established order under which he does not find liberty and protection. The Chicago teachers have already been supplied with ample proof that the established order does not protect them, and Mayor Kelly now wants to take away as well their liberty to change it. "The law, which I understand will carry penalties, will not only help to insulate the schools from false ideas but will help spread a sense of security and stability among people at large. I would like to see it, the law, applied to all persons living under the American flag, with deportation for those who don't like it." So speak the tyrants of all ages, from the Bourbons and the Romanovs to the Hitlers and the Kellys. Such limited intelligences fail to understand that a forced proclamation of loyalty will not create loyalty to undeserving institutions.

REVERSING a decision of the highest court of Illinois, the Supreme Court has recently ruled that bankruptcy wipes out the claims of attachments to wages or salaries. This is a rare depression victory for the little man who has seen bankers avoid the income tax and great corporations free themselves of unpleasant rent and interest charges while his own debts seemed firmly riveted to him. The doctrine of the Illinois court that a wage earner could not free himself from an attachment was particularly onerous because the bulk of the debt of wage earners was exactly in that form. The loan companies and the sellers of goods on the instalment plan have for years felt secure behind the assurance that bankruptcy afforded no release for the wage earner if a wage lien could be slapped on him soon enough. Now the Supreme Court has ruled that

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Credit for this victory goes to Lloyd A. Faxon, a young Chicago attorney who single-handed and chiefly at his own expense carried the test case to the Supreme Court.

FOR the best mixed metaphor of 1934, we should like to award a clove of garlic and a slightly worn super-balloon tire to a distinguished Republican orator of Westchester County, New York. "The Democrats," he said, "are snakes in the grass who are eating away the foundations of our ship of state."

Planless Legal Planning

IT IS an open secret in Washington that the legal defenses of the New Deal are in a bad way. The Department of Justice is charged with the duty of enforcing the laws; yet its repeated failure to take an affirmative stand has created paralyzing doubts about the validity of the recovery program. A few days ago its program of futility was dramatically revealed in an incident in the federal control of oil. Chief Justice Hughes announced from the bench that, at the request of the government, the case of United States vs. Smith had been deferred to the fall. The suit had been brought by the Petroleum Board to obtain from the United States Supreme Court a decision that would make its authority effective. Business men and newspapers alike interpreted the postponement as evidence of an unwillingness on the part of the administration to submit the constitutionality of the N.I.R.A. to a judicial test.

It would be impossible to find a more suitable occasion for such a test. The Supreme Court has for months exhibited a decided swing to the left. It has recently sustained a statute of Minnesota granting a moratorium to persons unable to pay off their mortgages, and another of New York prescribing a minimum retail price for milk. It has accepted at face value an act of the state of Washington which under the pretense of levying a tax wipes out the market for all substitutes for butter. In its recent opinions it has rather consistently refrained from imposing vetoes upon social legislation, and has emphatically declared that the wisdom of public policies is within the competence of the legislature, not the judiciary.

Nor could a more persuasive case be found for a test of federal control. The supply of oil is definitely limited; conservation is essential; an unrestricted private ownership makes for reckless exploitation. However unwise may be the restriction of output in ordinary manufactured goods, long-time policy requires it in petroleum. The market, with its highly touted laws of demand and supply, has proved itself an ineffectual agency of order. The states, because of a haunting fear of losing markets to other states, have been utterly incapable of in-

enough to the great mass of operators; but a small minority, technically known as the "Ten Percent," persist in the production of bootleg, or "hot oil." The local courts, not unmindful of the hazard of losing trade to other regions, are loath to convict offenders or to issue restraining orders. The only practical choice is between federal control and chaos; and only a declaration from the United States Supreme Court can give the Petroleum Board the unquestioned authority it needs.

Such a mandate was sought in United States vs. Smith. A number of persons had been indicted in a federal court in Texas for exceeding the quotas assigned to them under the Oil Code. A demurrer to the indictment was sustained by the federal judge on the ground that the prescription of quotas by national authority was unconstitutional. An appeal from this ruling, in accordance with the Judicial Code, was taken directly to the United States Supreme Court. Thus, by the simple device of a demurrer, the validity of a typical measure in the recovery program was presented as a simple and direct issue, free from the complicating irrelevancies that attend an appeal from a conviction.

The appeal had been taken; an early date had been fixed for the argument; the brief, already finished, was about to be dispatched to the printer. The attorneys for the Petroleum Board were fully prepared and confident of the result. A bare two weeks before the case was to be heard, the government decided to ask for a postponement. A miscellany of reasons—irrelevant, contradictory, revealing—were urged against an immediate prosecution of the case. The Court might find a flaw in the indictment—as if the highest judicial body in the land would seek, by a search for a technical flaw, to evade a judgment upon the most important legislative act in a decade. It was a criminal case, and the Justices would lean over backward to be fair to the accused—but the accused had not yet been put into jeopardy and the case concerned no more than the validity of the statute under which they were to be tried. The administration must not be lulled into a sense of false security by the favorable decisions in the Minnesota moratorium and the New York milk case—a counsel of timidity under which corporation lawyers would never have got their clients so far as first base. And, in an unguarded moment, "The Court will probably find the act constitutional—and then we shall be expected to enforce the codes." The decision, announced by the Attorney General, wore the mark of reasonableness. The issue was of concern to both the Petroleum Board and the N.R.A., and since the N.R.A. was reluctant to risk battle he could not assume responsibility until he had opportunity to study the case.

The discussion that preceded this announcement was a mere occasion for a parade of rhetoric; one must get beneath it to find the roots of decision. A clash of personalities lies in the background; Gen-

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friends. A constitutional myopia has its part in the result; more than one attorney who busied himself about the case has his head and files so full of the minutiae of opinions, now of only historic importance, that he can get no perspective of the judicial scene. Far too many of the legal representatives of the government were consulted—a galaxy of lawyers is always a liability for aggressive action—and among the personnel of the Department of Justice are a number of old-fashioned trust-busters who look with suspicion upon any scheme of control tainted with "self-government in industry."

The nominal responsibility for legal defeat rests with the Attorney General. He has formulated no strategy for defending the program of the administration against legal attack. More than once in the lower courts, when a demurrer has been made to an indictment, a wire from Washington has ordered the case dropped. When the issue could no longer be escaped he has been caught wholly unprepared. Nor was this his first significant failure. In the autumn his department neglected to bring an action to test federal milk control; discovered to its consternation that a kindred issue was presented in the Nebbia case; decided to appear in that cause as an interested party; and then at the last moment, with the brief prepared and victory in sight, withdrew from the battle. But the press is probably right in attributing the result to the supine policy of the legal staff of the N.R.A., whose dilatory tactics have earned for them among their associates the heroic title of "the gutless wonders."

The effect of the policy, of which the postponement of the Smith case is a mere symbol, is clear enough. It reveals a situation in which power is divorced from responsibility. The Petroleum Board is wholly responsible for the administration of the Oil Code; yet its work may be completely undone by an uninformed decision of the Department of Justice. The decision to postpone will be generally interpreted as fear to meet the issue. As it was put in a news release sent out to the oil industry: "We predict a summer of hot oil." It has been generally regarded as a confession by the N.R.A. that it intends to go no further than talk in the matter of "cracking down"—except, perhaps, with such small fry as pants-pressers in New Jersey.

The incident is not without its touch of irony. An administration attempts to enforce laws in whose legal validity it has no confidence. An act of Congress is seriously imperiled by officials sworn to enforce it. A national recovery act is put in jeopardy, not by the United States Supreme Court, but by the amateur constitutionalists of the N.R.A. And as a consolation prize the Petroleum Board is accorded a qualified "administration support" for a "stronger oil bill." The legal staff of the government trembles at the thought that existing statutes go beyond the tolerance of the Constitution—and asks Congress for statutes that go further. Such, in this year of grace Nineteen Hundred and Thirty-Four, is planless legal planning.

The Armament Makers of Europe

WHILE American arms manufacturers, as Jonathan Mitchell shows in this week's issue of The New Republic, have been active recently, those in Europe also have not been idle. The present situation on the international arms market is parallel to the situation in the years between 1910 and 1914. In 1913 and 1914 there was a feverish activity in armament shares on every European exchange. Today, just as then, the "wise money," the prominent bankers, industrialists and speculators, are increasing their holdings in armament shares and stocks of those allied industries that provide the raw materials for armaments. In July, 1914, Sir Basil Zaharoff increased his holdings in Vickers-Armstrong shares, and so today the files at Somerset House show that great blocks of British armament and shipbuilding shares are changing hands daily.

During the past five years, armament firms have increased their capital and expanded their profits, as they did before 1914. For example, in 1909, the profits of Vickers amounted to £424,000; in 1910 they reached £474,000. In 1911, the year before the war scare, they rose to £544,000, to increase within the following two years, including the year after the war scare, to nearly double this amount, about £872,000. Similarly, Vickers has increased its profits during the last five years by approximately 12 percent a year; the annual dividend of Skoda rose from five percent in 1920 to 28½ percent in 1930. It appears that armament firms have always been correct when they anticipated war, and made preparations for handling increased output. Vickers, for example, increased its capital half a year before the outbreak of the Boer War, and then again in 1913 increased it by £740,000. This firm is now financing itself by keeping dividends as low as possible, thus increasing reserves by one-third during the past three years. How accurately Vickers anticipated the Great War may be seen from the fact that the £740,000 increase in capital was sold at a premium of ten shillings a share. In the year following, profits rose to £1,000,000.

Wars are usually preceded by war scares, which lead to an increase in the armament budgets of the nations concerned. The creation of a war scare is a simple matter for any astute director of an armament firm. A war scare usually indicates that industrial conditions in the country concerned will soon improve, for these war scares are so effectively proclaimed that public opinion is prepared to stand all possible effects this war may have upon the national-defense budget, effects that can only benefit the arms and allied industries.

For example, in the years 1906 to 1909, there was a distinct rise in unemployment and generally

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slackened industrial activity in Great Britain, under which the shipbuilding industries suffered particularly. On May 13, 1906, Mr. H. H. Mulliner, then managing director of the Coventry Ordnance Company, supplied the British Admiralty with what were later proved to be faked documents containing information regarding "gigantic preparations for an enormous increase of the German navy." A week before that incident Mr. Mulliner was afforded the opportunity of giving evidence before a secret Cabinet meeting concerning the "terrifically accelerated production of armaments in Germany," and was subsequently permitted to tell the House of Lords that "a terrible awakening is in store for us at no distant date." All these maneuvers resulted in the famous naval scare of 1909 with its favorite slogan, "We want eight and we won't wait." Ten days after Mr. Mulliner's presentations, the British naval estimates for 1909 to 1910 showed an increase of £2,823,200, although Mulliner's charges were discredited in a subsequent debate in the House of Commons. None the less this episode initiated the naval race between Great Britain and Germany, a race that produced a rapid restoration of prosperity to British shipbuilding and related trades.

Ever since the international post-war decline in industrial and commercial activities has been stabilized into what is commonly called "the depression," armament firms without exception have been occupied in a fashion that is in no way different from those pre-war days. The international armament, shipbuilding, aviation and allied industries have been experiencing a boom for the past two years. Underlying the world economic revival, which so many experts have been able to observe of late, a large influence has been the tremendously increased activities in those trades that are directly or indirectly concerned with the manufacture of arms. Wherever these activities have occurred—the nickel boom that has given such an impetus to Canada's export trade, or the quadrupling of the exports of Belgian iron ore to Germany during the past year, or the purchase of several hundred vessels by Japan for the sole purpose of breaking them into scrap iron—none would have been possible but for the boom in the arms trade. The French armament industry actively supported Hitler's election campaign, with the result that today French steel furnaces are working in two shifts. That times have not changed since 1910, and that it is still a common practice among armament makers to resort to the foulest possible means, bribery, corruption and the dissemination of faked reports concerning military expenditures of other nations, simply in order to produce a "scare," may, for example, be seen from the events that led to the Rumanian-Soviet scare of 1930. This was later described in the Rumanian Chamber by Dr. Goga, a Cabinet Minister, as follows:

> You will remember the formidable panic that seized in the press, in public meetings, above all, in the homes of Bessarabia, only one thing was discussed—the imminent invasion of the Soviet army. Russian troops, so it was said, were concentrated at Tiraspol on the Dneister, ready to invade Bessarabian territory.
>
> I personally was the dupe of these rumors and I started to bombard the members of the Regency with questions as to their policy, since it seemed certain that the Russians were going to attack us and that our army was not prepared. Finally I asked an audience of Prince Nicholas and the Patriarch, members of the Regency Council, to find out the opinion of the situation in influential circles.
>
> But on the day of my interview with the Patriarch the alarms ceased like a miracle. The vast maneuvers that had produced so great a panic evaporated as by the waving of a wand. The Patriarch received me with the following words: "Come, Mr. Goga, why all this agitation? You can now rest assured that all will be well. We have just sent a large order for war material to the Skoda works."
>
> Then, gentlemen, I understood. I was forced to recognize that I, like everyone else, had been the victim of an extremely clever piece of wangling. Since that time, I have always accepted news concerning the danger of "imminent conflict" with more prudence.

Hundreds of other examples could easily be given. The guerilla wars that have been going on during the past three years in South America were only possible because of the unrestricted private manufacture of arms. Countries like Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay and Colombia would have had nothing to fight with had it not been for imported arms.

These incidents are symptomatic of what is going on today in all parts of the world. A capitalist order that is moribund hopes to get a new lease on life by an economic revival artificially produced by an increase in the output of those industries that manufacture instruments for the destruction of human lives. A situation has developed that is analogous to the situation in 1913. As a result of subtle propaganda and the skillful creation of war psychology, international capital in general, and the international arms trade in particular, have started the Great Powers on an armament race that makes the chance of war greater.

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Art Tomorrow

IN THE course of several articles recently printed in The New Republic, I criticized an attitude toward art and life that prevailed in the literary world of the 1920's. This attitude, which I called the religion of art, I tried to describe in terms of the books it produced and the unsatisfactory courses of action to which it led. I said that it now belonged to the past, that it died in theory with the Dada movement and in practice with the world crisis of capitalism, but I gave no more than a hint of the ideas or doctrines that I thought would take its place.

It is part of a critic's job to be honest with his readers, to state his own ideas and not to hide behind a mask of historical infallibility. What were the assumptions from which I wrote?

I might simply present them as the answers to an imaginary questionnaire. Let us suppose that you, the reader, have compiled a list of questions dealing with the problems of artists in the age now beginning. And let us suppose that I, the writer, have undertaken to answer them, not exhaustively, for that would require a book or a library of books, but informally and briefly.

Should artists devote themselves, you ask first of all, *to art or propaganda?*

In terms of an apparently simple distinction between two familiar words, this question conceals a type of metaphysical thinking that carries us back toward the beginning of German Romantic philosophy. It was Kant, in fact, who advanced the notion that esthetic activity and practical activity (in other words, art and life) are forever separate and that art has no goal outside itself, being "purposiveness without purpose"—*Zweckmässigkeit ohne Zweck.* This notion was elaborated by other German thinkers, and especially by Schopenhauer, who in turn exerted a great influence on the art-for-art's-sake movement in France. Eventually it took the shape of a whole series of things supposed to be in eternal opposition—form against matter, art against life, artists against philistines, poetry against science, emotion against reason, then vision or imagination against will or purpose, contemplation against action, and finally poetry or art against propaganda. In this last opposition, all the others are secretly contained. "Art" is vision, form, repose, truth and beauty, the eternal, everything that is "good" for the artist. "Propaganda" is effort, change, science, philistinism, falsity and ugliness, everything that is artistically "evil." Once we have accepted these definitions of art and propaganda, the question of choosing between them seems ridiculous.

But the definitions themselves are not to be accepted. They imply a special attitude toward life and, in particular, a metaphysical doctrine that Schopenhauer was the first to put forward. It was his idea that "the world" is evil and changing and animated by universal Will, and that the artist's duty and privilege is to escape from the world into the sphere of "art," of esthetic contemplation, of perfect will-lessness. One cannot say that any metaphysical notion of this sort is now "exploded" in the sense that a scientific theory may be exploded by the accumulated force of observed facts. It is certain, however, that Schopenhauer's metaphysic is sentimental and completely foreign to the scientific temper.

Today we know as a simple matter of record that the universe is actually changing in all its parts, from star galaxies down to species of microscopic plants, but we cannot say that this process of universal change is either "good" or "evil"; our adjectives aren't big enough to circumscribe the cosmos. Today we know by virtue of our personal experiences, our pains and pleasures, that human society is changing also. We know that men's ideas and ambitions, and the conflicts between them, are part of this changing world, as are also the works of art that men produce. There is no single type of human activity, whether it be painting pictures or smoking pipes or making money, that can be treated as if it existed separately from all the other types of human activity. The whole series of oppositions—art against life, poetry against science, contemplation against action—can safely be swept aside. The real answer to the question whether writers and painters should devote themselves to art or propaganda is that the question is irrelevant: writers should devote themselves to writing and painters to painting.

Yet there is a real distinction that partly takes the place of the one supposed to exist between art and propaganda. The real distinction is not metaphysical, but personal and practical, and it depends very simply on the level of mind from which one writes. If one writes only from the top level of consciousness, in the light of beliefs that have been recently acquired and not assimilated, one is almost certain to write badly, to neglect or distort the things that are hidden underneath, to write in a way that is emotionally false and can be dismissed as "propaganda." But if one has fully absorbed the same beliefs, has felt and lived them, one may treat them in a way that is emotionally effective—that is in other words "art."

And now you have another question. *What,* you ask, *is the function of art? In other words, what will take the place of the religion of art after it disappears?* I don't know

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"purging," a "refinement of gross experience," a "center of repose"; is it amusement, escape, self-expression, or a useful means of inciting people to good actions? I suspect that on occasion it can be any or all of these. One thing I know for certain. There is no single theory of the function of art that has not finally confined and narrowed and impoverished art, whether the theory be that of Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Schopenhauer, Mallarmé, Plekhanov or the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers. Art is obviously richer, more varied in its purposes and effects, than any of the theories that have tried to reduce it to order and guide it in one direction. When the religion of art disappears, let us hope that no other limiting doctrine will take its place.

And yet—always this qualification creeps in—there is one function of art I should like to see emphasized above the others, and that is its humanizing function. I believe that all good works of literary art have the same fundamental thesis. All of them teach us that life is bigger than life—that life as portrayed by the creative imagination is more intense, more varied, more purposeful (or perhaps more futile), more tragic or comic, more crowded with events and meanings and yet more harmoniously organized than is the life we have been leading day by day. Sometimes we are discouraged by the contrast and try to escape into a dream world that seems to be, but really is not, the world of the artist. Sometimes we merely contemplate the work of art, gratefully and with a feeling of relief from strain. Sometimes, however, we try to reinterpret our daily lives in the light of the artist's vision. The new values we derive from his work, when projected into our own experience, make it seem more poetic, dramatic or novelistic, more sharply distinguished from the world of nature, in other words, more human.

I am repeating here some of the ideas I advanced four years ago, in an article on the American Humanists. In addition to giving more humanity to our lives, I said, art also has the function of humanizing nature, in the sense of making it more fit for human beings to live in. The prehistoric world must have seemed alien and terrible to the first tribes that wandered over the face of it. Vast portions of the world are alien to their descendants today. Before a man can feel at home in any surroundings, whether those of seaside or forest, metropolis or factory, he must first transform the objects about him by connecting them with human emotions, by finding their purpose and direction, by making them understandable. He repeats the same process in the world at large, by perceiving in it architectural and musical forms, unity and rhythm, by giving it a history, and chiefly by transfusing it with myth. This last phrase is a little pretentious, and yet it describes an essentially simple operation of the mind. It is what a sailor does by calling his vessel "she," and an engineer by giving a name and human attributes to his engine—"Old Ninety-Six is [illegible] of it affectionately. A poet or a painter does the same thing in a richer and more communicable fashion; he gives things names and values; he makes them touchable.

At any rate this double humanizing function of art, as exercised on the world of nature and the world of society, is a task that is never finished; it has to be repeated with each succeeding age. Continually the natural environment is changing—is being changed by men whose relations with one another are also changing, together with the means by and the ends for which they live. Every age has its own myths to create, but some ages fail to create them. Often it happens that both the human and the natural worlds transform themselves so rapidly that they outrun men's ability to digest them. This undoubtedly is what has taken place since the Great War, with the rapid development of applied science, power machinery and mass production, the splendor and decay of capitalism and the growing self-awareness of the proletariat. What Shelley said of his own age can be applied more truly to ours: "We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know; we want the generous impulse to act that which we imagine; we want the poetry of life: our calculations have outrun conception; we have eaten more than we can digest." Today we are entering a period when artists of Shelley's stature are more necessary than scientists or engineers.

And now you turn to the political questions that have been playing an always greater part in literary discussions. *Should artists,* you ask, *take part in the class struggle?*

There is no use adjuring them to take part in it or warning them to keep out of it; the adjurations and warnings are so much wasted breath. The artists will and do take part in it, because they are men before they are writers or painters, and because their human interests are involved, and because they can't stay out of the battle without deliberately blinding and benumbing themselves—and even then they are likely to find that they have been led into it without their knowledge and on a side they mightn't consciously have chosen.

And which side do you think the artists will choose?

I hope and trust that a great number of them will take the workers' side, and I think that doing so will make them better artists. On the other hand, I realize that it will be hard for many others not to take the side of the classes now in power.

On that side are most of their old friendships and childhood memories. On that side are all the institutions they have been depending on for a livelihood—the press, the stage, the movies, the radio and, in the background, business, the schools and universities, the Army, the Church, the State. On that side, too, there seems to be all the culture inherited from the past, and with it all the mellow[illegible] of a class grown old in power.

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the glamor that surrounds men and women in the habit of being served and obeyed. On the other side are ordinary people who never heard of Chaucer, and dress without taste when they don't dress shabbily, and eat their food with smacking noises and pile cups and saucers on top of their plates to show that the meal is over. They are people without manners or distinction, Negroes, hill billies, poor whites, Jews, Wops and Hunkies. If they should win the struggle here as they have in Russia, there are likely to be years of privation and desperate inefficiency, and there are certain to be harshness, narrowness, fanaticism, the eternal vices of a class struggling to power.

Yet the capitalists can in reality promise less than they seem to promise. The audience they offer to works of art is always limited, not only in numbers but also in capacity for appreciation. Under capitalism only a few people can afford to buy books or pictures or attend plays or concerts, and many of them are snobs who don't come to see or hear, but merely to be *seen* in a good theatre, to be *heard* talking about the books they have read. The mellowness and liberalism of the present ruling class are merely the ornaments of its prosperous years; in times of danger they give way to brutality direct and unconcealed. Its cherishing of individual freedom gives way at critical moments to a call for unquestioning blind obedience to the State, and its fostering of science is replaced by dark myths of race and war and destiny. Eventually it threatens the complete destruction of culture, since its inevitable and insoluble self-contradictions are leading it toward wars in which, tomorrow, not only books will be destroyed, but the libraries that contain them, and not only museums, universities, theatres, picture galleries, but also the wealth by which they are supported and the living people for whom they exist.

These are the prospects really held out to the artist by those who rule under the profit system. As for the other side, that of the factory workers and poor farmers and people now looking for jobs, it can actually promise much more than it seems to promise. First of all, it can offer an end to the desperate feeling of solitude and uniqueness that has been oppressing artists for the last two centuries, the feeling that has reduced some of the best of them to silence or futility and the weaker ones to insanity or suicide. It can offer instead a sense of comradeship and participation in a historical process vastly bigger than the individual. It can offer an audience, not trained to appreciate the finer points of style or execution—that will come later—but larger and immeasurably more eager than the capitalist audience and quicker to grasp essentials. It can offer the strength of a new class.

And it can offer something else to the artist. Once he knows and feels the struggles of the oppressed classes all over the world, he has a way to get hold both of distant events and those near at hand, and housewives gossiping on the back porch about their husbands' jobs and the price of groceries, a small merchant bankrupt in the next block, a love affair broken off, a mortgage foreclosed, a manufacturer's rise to power—all these incidents take their place in a historical pattern that is also illuminated by revolts in Spain, a new factory in the Urals, an obscure battle in the interior of China. Values exist again, after an age in which they seemed to be lost; good and evil are embodied in men who struggle. It is no longer possible to write, as did Joseph Wood Krutch only a few years ago, that "we have come, willy-nilly, to see the soul of man as commonplace and its emotions as mean," or to say that the tragic sense of life has been lost forever. Tragedy lives in the stories of the men now dying in Chinese streets or in German prisons for a cause by which their lives are given dignity and meaning. Artists used to think that the world outside had become colorless and dull in comparison with the bright inner world they so tenderly nourished; now it is the inner world that has been enfeebled as a result of its isolation; it is the outer world that is strong and colorful and demands to be imaginatively portrayed. The subjects are waiting everywhere. There are great days ahead for artists if they can survive in the struggle and keep their honesty of vision and learn to measure themselves by the stature of their times. MALCOLM COWLEY.

Van der Lubbe

O staring eyes, searchlight disks,
Listen at my lips. I am louder than to
Swim an inhuman channel, be boy, or climb
A town's notorious mast.

I throw you these words, I care not which I tear,
You must eat my scraps and dance.
I am glad I am glad that this people is mad
Their eyes must drink my newspaper glance.

Why do you laugh? Somber judge asks.
I laugh at this trial although it shall make
My life end at a dazzling steel gate,
Axe severing a stalk.

Yes, no, yes, no. Shall I tell you what I know?
Not to Göring, but dear movietone, I whisper it to you.
I laugh because my laughter
Is like justice, twisted by a howitzer.

The senses are shaken from the judging heart:
The eye turned backwards and the outside world
Into the grave of the skull rolled:
With no stars riding heaven, and disparate.

The spitting at justice, the delight of mere guns
Exploding the trees, where in their branches
Truth greenly balances, are what I am
Who die with the dead and slobber with fun.

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The Armaments Scandal

II: *Sowing Death Abroad*

IN THE preceding article, we saw something of the methods used by armament firms in this country in forcing Congress to expand our army and navy. Most of these firms are likewise engaged in selling their murderous wares to foreign governments. The most aggressive and successful have been the military-airplane makers—precisely the same three or four companies that are responsible for our own fantastically swollen air fleets.

The immense danger to peace contained in the activities of our plane manufacturers abroad was demonstrated vividly a few weeks ago by the outburst of Mr. Eiji Amau, Japanese Foreign Office spokesman. Mr. Amau's outburst was generally anti-American, and against the white race, but his specific protest was against the sale of American military planes to the Nanking Chinese government. About a year ago, it will be remembered, the Roosevelt administration through the R.F.C. granted the Nanking government a $50,000,000 credit for the purchase of wheat and cotton. It has since transpired that at about the same time, a former United States Army Air Corps officer, Colonel John Jewett, departed for Nanking to instruct Chiang Kai-shek's troops in military aviation. With him went three airplane-engine experts and eight pilots, all former members of our army or navy air forces. Close on the heels of Colonel Jewett's group, appeared Major James Doolittle, the great speed flier, representing the Curtiss-Wright Corporation, who proceeded to sell fighting planes like hot cakes. A swarm of other American airplane salesmen followed, the latest among whom has been Lieutenant-Commander Frank M. Hawks. Commander Hawks, also a famous flier, has been peddling the new Curtiss-Wright bomber, reputedly faster than any similar airplane possessed by Japan.

In appearance, it will be noted, this sequence of events follows the classic formula of the armaments racket. First you have the professedly innocent loan, then the disguised military mission and lastly the munitions salesmen and heavy purchases of arms. Mr. Amau attempts by implication to connect the $50,000,000 R.F.C. credit directly with the American sales of airplanes. It should be stated at once: there is no evidence to confirm this. The granting of the credit at about the same time Colonel Jewett arrived in Nanking seems to have been a pure, although very unfortunate, coincidence. However, in permitting Colonel Jewett to go to China at all, it seems to this correspondent that our State Department was culpable. One of the State Department should have foreseen that in the existing tension in the Far East, the sudden acquisition of American planes by China would be bound to alarm and infuriate Japan. Had the State Department been more concerned to appease American-Japanese relations than to promote the sales of the Curtiss-Wright Corporation, it would have prevented Colonel Jewett's mission, as it readily might have done.

As Mr. Harrison Forman pointed out in last week's New Republic, the United States exported to China (including Hongkong) in 1933 $2,246,000 worth of airplanes and accessories, including 122 complete planes. Curtiss-Wright is building a huge military-plane factory at Hangchow. The recently published Aircraft Yearbook says that China last year acquired fifty Curtiss-Hawk pursuit biplanes, with top speed of 200 miles an hour. Other sources give the total number of military planes bought by China from us in 1933 as 142. These are samples of the situation.

Admittedly the governing group in Japan is suspicious, belligerent, bent on destruction. Japan's conduct towards China, Russia and the League of Nations has been thoroughly evil. But that is no reason why the United States should permit its munitions makers deliberately to exacerbate the Japanese war psychosis. Even less should we furnish the weapons for Chinese civil war. This correspondent is convinced that Japan is grimly determined to end the sale of American military planes to China. It is an issue that the Roosevelt administration will have to face, probably in the very near future. Last month Secretary of State Hull delivered a homily on the sacredness of the Open Door. We are entitled to know from Mr. Hull for whom he wants to keep the Open Door ajar. Is it for peaceful merchants, against whom no Japanese protest has been made, or is it for the vendors of swift, terrible death?

The other group of American manufacturers—besides the airplane companies—to make conspicuous profits from the war threats of the Far East has been the automobile concerns. Last year the value of trucks and buses exported to Japan was $1,238,889; to China, $521,826. These totals, however, are only a fraction of the truck and bus exports of previous years. There is an American automobile company now operating in Japan, and apparently the larger part of Japan's military needs are being supplied from this source.

Information concerning exports of firearms and

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character. The Department of Commerce figures for exports to China in 1933, in categories in which totals exceeded $1,000, were: revolvers and pistols, $6,424; machine guns and ordnance, $11,000; cartridges, $5,538; explosives other than smokeless powder and dynamite, $74,240. Exports to Japan were: cartridges, $4,100; other ammunition, $2,460. The primary lesson to be learned, however, about the armaments racket is that such things as rifles and cartridges in international trade travel in unmarked boxes, and usually appear on customs records and ships' manifests as "kerosene." If China or Japan did, in fact, purchase any considerable quantity of firearms or explosives from us last year, the one certain thing about the transaction is that it was shrouded in all the secrecy of international narcotics smuggling.

The general opinion of experts, however, is that while our sales to China and Japan were probably not so microscopic as the Department of Commerce figures indicate, they were not large. Japan manufactures its own firearms and explosives at home, reputedly under license from the English firm of Armstrong-Vickers. It is also fairly well established that during 1932 and part of 1933, Japan made heavy purchases of arms in France and Czechoslovakia. China is credited with buying from English, French, Czech, German, Italian and Japanese manufacturers—this impartiality being the reason that League investigations into the traffic in arms to China never make headway.

If the United States does not supply Japan with finished arms, we are unquestionably one of her most important sources of the raw materials for armaments. Japanese imports of American cotton in 1933 were half a million bales above those for 1931, the year Japan seized Manchuria. Not only has American cotton provided the Japanese with explosives but, manufactured and reëxported as cotton textiles, it has made possible Japan's recent furious industrial activity, and has enabled Japan to finance her staggering military burdens.

The United States is likewise Japan's principal source of scrap iron for steel making. Lately Japanese interests have been reported combing our shipping market in search of idle tramp freighters to be sent back to Japan to be broken up. In 1933, the Japanese took 547,539 tons of scrap iron from us, valued at $4,738,917. In the first two months of 1934, they greatly increased their rate of buying, taking 116,868 tons of scrap. They are also large purchasers of special steels and scrap tin. In the unlikely event of a war between the United States and Japan, it would be entirely possible that the first American sailor to die would be killed by a shell of 100-percent-American origin, and that the explosive behind the shell, the gun from which it was fired and the Japanese warship on which the gun was mounted would be equally of American materials.

Although Europe is supposed to be the great center of the munitions racket, American armaments are occasionally successfully sold there. Mr. Hiram Maxim, the arms inventor, for instance, has made a great deal of money in Europe. Lately Hitler's illegal rearming of Germany seems to have provided a fat opportunity for our military-airplane manufacturers. Three Boeing bombers were purchased by Germany in February of this year. A few weeks ago, Mr. Ernst Udet demonstrated the Curtiss-Hawk fighter at Tempelhof Field, near Berlin, before a rapturous crowd of officials including the ex-Crown Prince. "The first performance of a modern military plane in Germany," it was jubilantly explained. Within the last few days, the French Air Ministry announced its purchase of the European manufacturing rights to the Lockheed "Electra" bomber, capable of 221 miles an hour, solely to prevent them from being snapped up by General Göring.

The third market for our munitions is South America. Arms from the United States are now being used in one actual war, that between Bolivia and Paraguay for the northern Chaco, and are being largely purchased in preparation for another, the conflict between Colombia and Peru over Leticia. The armaments racket is a loathsome trade in any case, but selling munitions to South America seems to this correspondent the meanest possible way of making money. Modern instruments of mass killing have wrought havoc among the primitive Indians and *mestizos* who form the armies on both sides of the Chaco war. Neither Bolivia nor Paraguay has medical services worth mentioning, and the wounded in the Chaco suffer slow, horrible deaths. A war in the Leticia jungle, 2,000 miles up the Amazon River, would be just as evil a business.

American munitions sales to Bolivia are difficult to estimate, not only because of the general unreliability of all arms statistics, but because Bolivia is a land-locked country, and receives its imports through Chile and Peru. Similarly, imports to Paraguay are usually landed first in Argentina. For 1933, Department of Commerce figures show Bolivia taking American airplanes and accessories valued at $256,742, including seven complete planes. Peru is listed as taking airplanes and accessories worth $360,385, including sixteen complete planes. As we have just seen, it is impossible to say whether these sixteen Peruvian planes represent Peru's own preparations for war over Leticia, or whether they were transshipped to Bolivia. No airplane exports to Paraguay are recorded, but Argentina during 1933 and the first three months of this year took airplanes and accessories worth $715,870, part of which is thought to have been for Paraguay's account. Incidentally, Bolivia at present holds command of the air in the Chaco war, and has threatened to use its American planes to bomb the defenseless Paraguayan capital of Asunción, as reprisal for Paraguay's mistreatment of prisoners. Because of the threat of a Leticia war, Colombia has made herself [illegible]

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largest export market of our plane makers, taking during 1933 and the first three months of 1934, thirty complete planes and accessories, valued at $999,864.

Quite parenthetically, this correspondent would like to answer the accusation that South America, through its exports of Chilean nitrates, is itself an important factor in the munitions trade. There have lately been constant reports of steamers loaded with nitrates crowding through the Panama Canal, and we have been assured this was a sign of the imminence of general European war. It is true there have been large nitrate shipments recently, but that these have any connection with war, except perhaps in the case of Japan, is altogether unlikely. According to chemical-trade experts, there is no Great Power that does not now have facilities for the fixation of atmospheric nitrogen sufficient for its most extravagant war needs. Present sales of Chilean nitrates are smaller than in any previous year except 1932. The only two countries increasing their purchases are Egypt, where natural nitrates seem particularly prized by Sudan cotton growers, and Japan. Japan's purchases are avowedly to encourage Chilean buying of Japanese manufactures; they may also represent a war measure.

Before leaving the subject of South America, it is worth noting that our munitions makers' biggest bonanza since the World War was the 1932 Paulista revolution in Brazil. Secretary of State Stimson, while placing an embargo on arms shipments to the revolutionists, officially encouraged sales to the Rio de Janeiro government. Brazil bought 111 airplanes, valued at $2,282,245, and machine guns, ordnance and cartridges worth $363,232.

In the preceding article, it was urged that the only way to end the pressure of the munitions lobby on Congress, and to ensure that the size of our armaments shall be dictated by common sense and not by the greedy desire for profits of a few big corporations, is to make munitions manufacturing in the United States a government monopoly. Such a step, at one strike, would likewise largely end the scandal of arms exports. Probably one weapon, the bombing airplane, would require special treatment. Passenger transport planes and bombers are now virtually indistinguishable; if passenger transports continued to be manufactured by private companies, some sort of export license would be needed to prevent their being sold abroad for adaptation to war purposes. Military trucks would be similarly hard to distinguish from bona-fide commercial trucks. But almost all other arms—fighting and pursuit planes, tanks, armored cars, ordnance and machine guns, projectiles and the rest—if they were made solely by the government could be absolutely controlled.

The case of raw materials for armaments is far different. If a business man wishes to export a cargo of scrap iron on consignment, there is no

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what country it will ultimately be landed, nor to what use it will be put. The U.S.S.R. is the only nation in the world that has made even a beginning towards coördinating its political and commercial policies. Under private capitalism and in a world of nationalist states, the United States cannot prevent other countries from using American materials to manufacture munitions. Neither can we, single-handed, prevent the international arms trade. But we can stop American business men from having a direct share in that trade—and in view of Chiang Kai-shek and his American pursuit planes, the sooner we do so, the better for this country and peace.

JONATHAN MITCHELL.

This is the second of two articles on the international arms business.—THE EDITORS.

Happy Days for Hotel Keepers

BUSINESS has been making hay by the light of the N.R.A. In exchange, as it were, for its nominal acceptance of Section 7a, giving labor the statutory right to bargain collectively—a right that avails nothing because the statute is not enforced—business has gained a grand opporunity to do legally many things that the Sherman Act has forbidden. The provisions of the Sherman Act, it is true, are at present suspended only until June 16, 1935. But business has taken advantage of this suspension. Open-price associations, legal prohibitions against selling below cost, the banning of discounts or of liberal terms of payment—all these have been written into numerous codes under the guise of "Rules of Fair Competition" and "Fair Trade Practice." Such codes have been approved in almost countless numbers. But now come some new sets of "Rules of Fair Trade Practice" that make the writers of rules previously adopted look like paltry pikers.

The Hotel Industry got its Code approved on November 17. The Code contains an Article on Trade Practice (Article VII). The restrictions imposed are fair enough—simply the kind of thing the Federal Trade Commission has hammered away at for years. They prohibit advertising that misrepresents, secret honoraria to employees or agents of guests for the purpose of obtaining the guest's business, espionage upon the business of competitors. So far, so good. But now the several Code Authorities of certain local areas come forward with proposed "Local Rules of Fair Trade Practice." And astonishing examples of fair trade practice they are indeed.

That proposed by the New York City Authority, for example, after declaring that

> the provisions of this Supplemental Code and such other provisions as may hereafter be added hereto shall apply to every hotel and to each member of the hotel industry operating a hotel in the city of New York, state of New York,

requires each member of the industry to file a schedule of rates with the Hotel Code Authority of New York City within fifteen days, "which schedule shall be effective upon approval of the Hotel Code Authority of New York City."

The supplemental Code then details the rules of "Fair Trade Practice." In sum, *and in almost so many words*, it is fair to extract all that you can from the consumer, but unfair to attempt to give him very much in the way of service or accommodation for his hotel dollar.

For example, it becomes (if the code is adopted) an unfair practice to "serve meals or food in guests' rooms, except at an extra charge of not less than ten cents per person in each room-service food order. . . ." Likewise, it becomes unlawful to charge "less than ten cents for bread and butter, except with fixed-price meals."

Similarly, it is illegal to send a pitcher of ice up to a room except at a charge of "no less than twenty-five cents per service," if the hotel has a liquor license and the ice is for the "serving of the guest's own liquor."

Nor may any member of the hotel industry "charge less than ten cents for a local telephone call transmitted through the hotel switchboard." And if the luckless guest makes a call home to his wife or sweetheart:

> No member of the hotel industry shall charge for suburban or long-distance calls transmitted through the hotel switchboard less than the local telephone company's rates plus a service charge of not less than ten percent thereof.

But the latter rule applies chiefly to transients, who perhaps have no right to expect hotel accommodations at reasonable cost. Does the permanent apartment-hotel dweller fare better? Apparently not:

> No member of the hotel industry shall rent or offer for rent unfurnished rooms or apartments for periods of less than one year, except for periods ending on the following September 30, unless the monthly rate or charge therefor shall exceed one-twelfth of the yearly rate by at least 25 percent.

And if the permanent hotel inhabitant is so uncongenial as to install a private telephone at his own expense, but you happen not to know this and call him through the hotel's number, that call may cost him two dollars:

> No member of the hotel industry shall charge less than $2 per month for service for telephone calls, incoming through the hotel switchboard, to a room or apartment equipped with an independent private telephone line.

That, however, is in enterprising and commercial New York, where consumers expect to get stung. Let us look at the allegedly sleepy and guileless city of Philadelphia.

Among other choice Rules of Fair Practice, the Philadelphia Hotel Code Authority proposes that it shall be unlawful to "distribute free newspapers, magazines or periodicals in guests' rooms."

Nor can a hotel company give to charity; that would be an unfair trade practice. The Code says it would be illegal to

> donate money or other thing of value, purchase tickets or subscribe to requests for financial assistance on the part of local clubs, societies, schools, churches or similar organizations.

And as for letting any guest try to cut expenses by bringing an apple or an orange up to his room instead of taking his mid-morning lunch or afternoon tea in the hotel restaurant, Heaven forbid! The Code says to carry an apple or a box of candy up to your room is unlawful (unless you bought it in the hotel). Really. This is what the Philadelphia Hotel Code Authority actually proposes to write into the law (approved codes, it has been held, become part of the law of the land). It is declared an unfair trade practice to

> permit guests to bring into any hotel for service to themselves or others, or for sale, *any commodity or commodities* sold by the hotel as part of its regular service to the public; such commodity or commodities *must* be purchased from the hotel. (Italics mine.)

According to this, if the hotel had a men's clothes shop, one would be permitted to register only if he were naked. He could then, of course, purchase his apparel in the hotel shop.

The crowning touch to the Philadelphia Code, however, is the provision concerning free accommodations, *i. e.*, "complimentary" rooms. The hotel must not

> offer to give complimentary accommodations to any person except as herein provided, it being specifically understood that nothing herein shall prevent a hotel from complimenting personal friends of the management or members of the hotel fraternity.

The hotel company thus may not legally give away its service to the public, but private graft—gifts to personal friends of the management or to fellow hotel proprietors—is quite proper.

What has been said calls for little comment. The rapacious eagerness of business to make profits through monopolies and price agreements rather than through increased efficiency, lower costs and improved service, is a phenomenon of long standing. But it has never been better illustrated than in these proposed "Supplemental Codes of Fair Trade Practice." The hearings on the proposals are being held in New York and Philadelphia this week (they will have started before this is published). All of the provisions cited may not be adopted. But that groups of business men, although long brazen in their disdain for the consumer's interest, should have the colossal effrontery to come out publicly

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with such a set of proposals shows convincingly that they regard the opportunity to "codify," with the anti-trust laws now suspended, not as a means of promoting recovery, but as a chance for greasing their own palms.

For the hotel keepers, happy days may soon be here again. But their patrons aren't quite so sure.

ROBERT ELLIS.

Washington Notes

The Administration Fogged in Its Own Confusion—Johnson's Comedy Grows Stale—Cummings Takes the Count

AS THE Stock Exchange Bill approaches passage without so far suffering emasculation, as the effort to weaken the Securities Act fails and a measure of vitality is restored to the Wagner Labor Bill—as these and a few other things develop, the pain of the industrialists and financiers becomes more acute. The feeling against the administration program gradually becomes more pronounced and much more vocal. The propaganda of the "interests" grows more effective and an increasing number of people are exhibiting dissatisfaction and apprehension. More members of Congress who publicly support the administration policies privately express dissent, and the disposition of candidates for reëlection to appeal to the voters on the simple platform of 100-percent support for the President has perceptibly lessened. The President still has his great personal popularity, but the blind acceptance of everything he advocates no longer prevails. There are few unprejudiced observers in Washington who will not agree to all this. The facts are conceded—privately, of course—by some quite close to the President, by men entirely loyal and wholly identified with the administration. In a word, we may still, as the President says, be "on our way," but we are staggering, not walking, and the cheers for the leader, while still loud, are not the unanimous and hearty chorus that used to swell so mightily.

All in all, this is the inevitable impasse sure to be reached by an administration that tries to build a coherent policy from a combination of enlightened liberalism and old-fashioned conservatism. The thing simply cannot be done, and particularly it cannot be done when the combination is so heavily flavored, not to say soaked and saturated, with partisan politics of the regulation type. The result, of course, is a lack of direction and general futility, which the rosiest statements and the most ardent administration appeals cannot wholly conceal. I hate to seem pessimistic—there may yet be a stiffening all along the administration line, there may yet be a renewal of the forward movement, but if there are any signs of this they escape me. It is impossible to observe the so apparent stalling without a feeling of regret at the lost opportunities. Strictly, they were not "lost," they were thrown away by a congenital lack of conviction on fundamentals and the utter absence of determination to follow a straight line.

The chief cause of unrest and discouragement centers in, around and about the N.R.A. (I am getting tired of repeating that, but the fact grows plainer every week.) Here, too, the trouble is a lack of decision. There is unanimous agreement, within as well as without the administration, that a complete reorganization of this part of the New Deal, in both policies and personnel, is essential. It would seem apparent, and it is to most, that this reorganization cannot be accomplished by the directing head of the N.R.A., since he happens to be the very man responsible for the mistakes and failures. To make the necessary basic changes General Johnson would not only have to reverse himself completely, confess to have been wrong from the start, but he would actually have to change his own nature. Give him all the credit you can for the manufactured enthusiasm with which the scheme was launched; admit that he is a marvel of energy, industry and patriotism; concede his mastery of the great art of ballyhoo, and agree that his loyalty and color are at least partial assets—concede all these things, and it is still impossible to regard him as the right man to pull down the structure he has himself erected, let alone to imagine that he is the man to build it anew along lines in which he thoroughly disbelieves. So long as Johnson is in supreme command the rebuilding just cannot be accomplished. But if the N.R.A. is not completely, and rapidly, rebuilt it will go on crumbling until nothing worth while is left of it. So clear is this that there is a very strong sentiment in the administration, particularly among important men in the Public Works Administration and in the Department of Agriculture, that the first essential is his retirement.

At times the General himself seems in accord with this view—but only at times. Now and again he will be—or seems to be—on the point of resigning. He will even permit this thought to percolate through the ranks of the correspondents. He will talk tentatively about it with the President—or so it is said. But nothing ever comes of it except newspaper stories made on "high authority" that the President is personally devoted to the General, that he appreciates deeply the noble work he has done, that he regards criticism of him as pure sabotage and will not permit him to resign. In the last six months we have gone through this procedure half a dozen times, ever since the real criticism of the N.R.A. began and the flaws in its operation and its policies became plain.

An increasing number of people here are beginning to find this backing and filling exceedingly tiresome. They are beginning to wonder exactly how far things must go before Mr. Roosevelt and the General, despite their mutual admiration and devotion, can agree that the cause to which both are so wholly dedicated will be best promoted, if not saved, by the retirement of the General, with the customary presidential letter of gratitude and appreciation, raised to the superlative—perhaps setting a record for eulogizing an official departure. I wonder myself whether they may not wait for the agreement until the time for salvation has passed and eulogies will be out of place. It is a thought the General might ponder.

Turning to another matter, the Mellon-Cummings incident, the administration's effort to make a criminal of the old gentleman turned out a howler for Mr. Cummings, and its repercussions are by no means over. I never expected, in this place, to pen words favorable to Mr. Mellon.

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No more overrated man, in my judgment, ever held a public office. He was one of the feeblest of all Secretaries of the Treasury and should never have been appointed; no man with his financial and business relations is a fit occupant of that office. Nevertheless, the effort to have a grand jury indict him for criminal tax dodging was an administration mistake, and those responsible are deeply regretting it. The unusual failure to get a grand jury, urged and steered by a Democratic district attorney, to present an indictment leaves the Attorney General in a defenseless and humiliating position.

It may easily be that Mr. Mellon owes the government more taxes than he paid, and this fact may be established after Treasury examination, hearings and action by the Board of Appeals. But to charge, before such hearings are held, that Mr. Mellon had criminally conspired to avoid payment is to assume that he and his highly paid lawyers suffer from a stupidity that is just too great to credit. Even assuming, however, that the aged and fabulously wealthy ex-Secretary were criminally inclined as well as wholly unintelligent, it still appears the very acme of stupidity for an Attorney General of the United States to force a district attorney to ask for a grand-jury presentment when he lacks sufficient evidence to obtain one—particularly when so little evidence is required in such cases. As things turned out, Mr. Mellon got a great deal of sympathy from people who do not particularly admire him, and the administration is open to attack—and has been attacked by Democratic papers—for having ignominiously failed in a ridiculously cheap and shoddy piece of political buncombe. One interesting question about it is still unanswered. Exactly who conceived the idea of handling the Mellon case in this way? It is entirely certain that Attorney General Cummings did *not* act upon his own initiative. He is not that kind of Attorney General.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Margin Gamblers' Propaganda—Contracting Construction—Banks in the Market?—Aldrich Did Not Help the Affiliates

THE HEAVIEST battering at the Stock Exchange Bill in its journey through Congress has come from the officials of corporations. Perhaps newspaper readers have been a little bit fooled by that. Of course, as everyone ought to know, all this ammunition was prepared by the Stock Exchange itself. But one may wonder why these Wall Street brokers can exercise such a powerful influence over corporation executives. The explanation is quite easy and it gives us a glimpse of one of the worst features of the whole rotten business of margin trading.

Brokers hold the margin stock they buy for customers. They have it transferred to their own names. They may borrow on the stock at the bank, but it still remains in their names. They can vote it when an election of corporate officers comes around. In 1929, for instance, out of 4,431,465 shares of Chrysler Corporation stock, 2,859,000 shares stood in the names of brokers. This was 64.52 percent. The Consolidated Oil Corporation had outstanding 5,460,000 shares. Of these 3,563,000, or 65 percent, stood in the names of brokers. Brokers held 39 percent of American Can, 38 percent of Anaconda Copper, 60 percent of Auburn, 35 percent of Bethlehem Steel, 43 percent of Montgomery-Ward, 53 percent of Pan-American Petroleum, 47 percent of Radio Corporation and 53 percent of R.K.O. It is easy to see that a little letter from the Stock Exchange to these corporations for help would bring a swift response. Of course, the percentages owned now are not so great. But they are still large enough to be of weight, and in some cases to control the corporation.

The present Stock Exchange Bill undertakes to limit margins. But the Wall Street evil will never be adequately dealt with until margin trading—gambling on credit in shares—is done away with. American corporations will never begin to serve the public properly until this broker control is ended—until, in fact, the brokers are thrown out of the corporations and the corporation executives are thrown out of Wall Street.

Those who keep their eyes on construction contracts as a barometer of approaching recovery will be interested in the record of construction for the last month. The weekly average was about the same as in March and a little less than in January. It is less than it was in October, November and December of last year. In other words, the construction industry, with the summer upon us, shows no tendency whatever to revive. Of course, bad as it is, it would be pitifully worse were it not for the government contracts. But even these continue to be unimportant. Private construction contracts for April, according to the tabulation of The Engineering News-Record, were, in round figures, $16,500,000 as against $29,000,000 in the first four weeks of March. Unless this industry pulls itself together in some way, around the middle or end of July Mr. Roosevelt will face a test that may bring back to Washington a Congress extensively emancipated from his control and may, for that matter, produce a country emancipated from the spell of the Roosevelt myth.

Back in the grand old days of the Sainted Calvin the banks were building up a thrifty business of buying and selling stocks for their customers. This got to be an important factor in the distribution of shares to the simple souls who were told to ask their bankers what to buy. The banks would not only tell you what to buy but would buy it for you and charge you $1.50 in addition to the brokerage commission. When the German government, in 1896, undertook to cripple speculation on its Berlin Bourse, the severe restrictions on credit and future trading and other exchange facilities had the effect of driving security speculation to the banks, particularly the two big broker banks of Berlin. Now we are to have a Stock Exchange Act. It is a matter of the greatest importance that steps be taken to keep the banks absolutely out of the security business. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the rumor, which has now reached Wall Street, that the Federal Reserve Board has ruled that after June 16 banks may not buy and sell stocks for customers is true. There are some restrictions on banks in the Stock Exchange Bill, but there is always the danger that ways may be found to circumvent the law.

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Two weeks ago I called attention to a bill introduced by Senator Fletcher of the Banking and Currency Committee to give banks another year in which to cut off their affiliates. In calling attention to this bill, I commented on the presence in Washington of Mr. Winthrop W. Aldrich, chairman of the board of the Chase National Bank, and his calls on the White House and Senator Fletcher. Later in Washington I had the opportunity to see the contents of a letter written by Mr. Aldrich on this very subject. I am glad to be able to chronicle that Mr. Aldrich not only exercised no effort to have banks given this extra year to divorce their affiliates, but actually opposed the bill. He very wisely stated in his letter that while the affiliates might need more time in which to liquidate their holdings to the best advantage there was no sound reason why the banks could not divorce their affiliates without further delay. I think it is due Mr. Aldrich to say that he used his influence on what Father Ryan called "the side of the angels." Let us hope no more will be heard of this bill. JOHN T. FLYNN.

Uncle Sam's Art Show

THE DAY when critical hair was torn over manners and mannerisms in painting is over; the battle raging around modernism, which drew fuel from a preoccupation with technique, has succumbed to the more righteous argument over the social views of the painter. If judgment on the exhibition of P.W.A.P. art, commissioned during Uncle Sam's brief but intensive period as an art patron and now on view at Corcoran Gallery at Washington, depends on its expression of social propaganda, the necessary conclusion is that the show is entirely negative. Any fevers that burned within the artists against the system that lifted them for four months into a fool's paradise of a living wage, and just as abruptly dropped them to earth again, have been religiously kept off their canvases. At least the regional and national siftings leave no trace of such an attitude in the 500 pieces of art shown.

But if these artists do not reflect what must have been in many cases a deplorable economic situation, certainly they rarely stoop to bootlicking. The vapid horrors of collective self-love traditionally perpetrated in the name of official art are gratifyingly absent. We want a cross-section of America, these artist-hirelings were told, and that is exactly what they have turned back to their employer —a panoramic picture of America, without tinsel, without pseudo-classic vaporizings, without fatuous graftings from the art-for-art-sakers. Their vision, if non-critical, is direct, objective, selective. Its only lack is a negative one. The artists have not chosen to see bread lines and strikes. Maybe they thought it wisest not to do so while drawing government pay.

If the show has one predominating motif, it is the glorification of the American job. Practically every occupation in the country is depicted, not as a soul-crushing slavery, not as a healthy joy to the worker, but as a dynamic picture of human muscularity in conjunction with the machine. The landscapes that do not boast some toiler in the fields, the factories that are not interlocked with some mechanical worker, are so few as to be lost in the crowd. Like the popular favorites of the cinema and the pulp magazines, this world is one of action, of saturated color, of bold, often garish, contrasts. The composite picture is strident, coarse-grained and electric; it breathes, has substance, vitality. The workers in pigment do not emerge as artists in the common sense of the word but as a vast, anonymous eye, as though the great untrained middle classes were suddenly granted an ability—though not often much facility—to project the aspects of their world into lively paint, and to close their eyes discreetly to unpleasant reminders of an intolerable plight before a kindly government took them under its wing. The conglomerate scene is of the immediate present; the pictures, merging with one another, are the work of unsophisticated observers, able to see and transfer that sight to paint, but inarticulate emotionally and spiritually.

Regional distinctions have little meaning in this assortment; they are evident only in a superficial way, as displayed in paintings of cotton fields, oil wells, skyscrapers and other typically local scenes. Slick, posterish patterns are as likely to be composed of skyscrapers as of farmers plowing in the fields, and deliberate crudity is as evident in pictures of city pushcarts as in those of Western hills. The potpourri of technical devices has diffused evidently to every corner of the country; the sum total is a rich mixture of every style that has made an imprint among art students for the last five decades—and their number is legion. The "Americanism" in this show lies in a dogged devotion to concrete reality, as half-revealed in superficial aspects.

The worst of the lot are the murals, as well as they can be judged from the large sketches shown. Obviously many artists who had never ventured beyond a three-foot canvas have been faced with the vast problems of filling a blank wall with significant design. The results show a pathetic waste of space, a complete inability to carry the eye beyond the flat plane of a wall. Even as two-dimensional decoration much of it falls short of run-of-the-mine magazine covers. There is one exception—the mural for Iowa State University, perhaps the most intelligently planned project in the country. In this case the conception and the plan were in the hands of Grant Wood, who directed a corps of fourteen assistant artists. Their organized endeavor has resulted in a coördinated job with no irritating defects of technique.

The collection remains intact until May 20 when it breaks up into never-to-be-reassembled sections. Already the grab-bagging has begun, with officials and members of Congress staking claims for their favorites, to be hung in offices where they will be efficiently hidden from public view. The White House has taken thirty-two, including one of the handsomest canvases in the show, "Country Road," by Glenn Chamberlain of Des Moines, Iowa. Others will be returned to their various regions there to be dispersed among public buildings. Officially, though, the entire collection is the property of the government. At present the American Federation of Arts is dickering for a reduced version of the exhibit to be taken on a nationwide tour, but so far nothing has been settled.

Meanwhile most of the artists have gone back to their old precarious livings. About five hundred who are in the midst of mural projects have been transferred to F.E.R.A. through coöperation with state commissions; none of these will continue longer than six months. The national office

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of P.W.A.P. in Washington is tying up loose ends, doing its last good deed by publishing names and addresses of the artists for prospective buyers of paintings. By June 15 the P.W.A.P. will be finally interred. The little splurge in art is done for; there are at present no indications that anything like it will be undertaken again.

The exhibit is attracting great crowds, gallery habitués and the merely curious among them. A guide is on hand each day to take the bewildered through the exhibition rooms. He talks deliberately and appreciatively of particular pictures, treating the good and the naïvely inept with equal enthusiasm. Audience, pictures and all, it's a first-class show.

Washington. HELEN BUCHALTER.

THREE POEMS

Spring's on the Curb

Business and bluebirds waken first in spring,
Steel and arbutus, an American date.
Motors and memories, so slick in rain,
Move up by silver points, to saturate.

Domestic to our bough, and primed with grace,
Song-sparrow pumps his song and drinks it back,
While Easter, smart and innocent, shines twice,
Once from the polish on a Cadillac.

My blood shakes in my flesh, and let it be,
For how the chorus from the market swells
Whose blessing falls upon a nation's woe
Like dawn upon the Texas Company's wells.

Narcissus takes the grade, so steep and raw,
April's pale omnibus is quick and due.
The earth is thine, Jehovah said of old,
If some is left when other men are through.

Listen, the eagle having dined on lark,
Sings like his dinner; you know what I mean.
Plumbers and bankers strolling out by dark
Smell spring and spring, and the best gasoline.

Between the violet and the dividend
The heart grows big in every patriot.
Here's resurrection we can understand,
This is the time, the very holy dot.

Ambassadors who bank in Rome and Greece
Feel sap in Washington and smile in French.
Even the President stares wistful, sees
The broad magnolia bud and wants the branch.

12 O'Clock Freight

Away, four miles, I heard the Santa Fé
Go down the track, and I could see the sight,
A freighter pulling out with cryptic cars,
So sealed and sullen in the flowered night.

At home and in my mind I saw her draw
Her secrets where black fences line the rail,
And choking orange groves abandoned to
No rain and flaky pestilence of scale.

And then by palmy drives and boulevards
Where stucco gleams beside the carob-tree,
And Spanish patios in vain enclose
Lone hearts from Iowa and Kankakee.

On by the oaks whose forest stoops upon
The listing hills: and once the drift of deer
Drew down with winter's waters green,
A herd of dreams in glassy atmosphere.

Here comes, she comes, here comes the glooming train
Flying her bloody smoke. People in bed
Rouse halfway, and made lonely at the sound
Touch hands and touch their hands to a dear head.

And tell me, night, the names of all the men
Who ride the freight train, stretched upon the cars,
Heavy and motherless and rockasleep,
Their hungry faces pointed at the stars.

What destiny, dark suburb, what asylum
Of rot will they slip off into at last,
When on the final freighter, oh caboose,
The ruby jerk and leer of light go past?

Into the valley, long San Gabriel,
The train crawls bleak and moaning down the track,
And from the rails the starlight spurts again
With sudden gush of brightness after black.

The Flight

Now I was running in the gaunt twilight and the stones
were sheer, my feet left blood there.
A rabbit leaped beside me, tore away like flame, I
screamed.
From the red cliff the soft owls fled. I ran, I heard their
scooping wings, I, running
Heard their female voices lapped in lust, I ran, the jut
of lava
From a cold volcano caught me running, I fell blank, rose
running
Saw the stripped moon let light into the desert, ran by
lack of luster, came
Where starving in his ribs coyote ate sour meat with sand,
cried brother, I cried brother, ran ran ran
Into the idle shock of night, the loathe of dark, touched
hell, cried out ran, and
Drank my own blood to keep alive, cried cried your name
that had no help, no help, fell, fell at last
Beside the gone, the ghost of waters, the damned alkali,
death's joke; but saw, just saw
As if I still had eyes, the quivering of the dawn.

HILDEGARDE FLANNER

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Some Recent Films

SO MANY pictures of fair or better quality have popped up recently that for the sake of inclusion I shall have to be rather more brief about all of them than most of them deserve. Aside from "Twentieth Century," which is good enough to require more space than is available this time, "Manhattan Melodrama" seems to lead the field. Its substance is not so much one of melodrama as of a study (not penetrating) of two boys growing up, the one outside the law, the other within; and of the pull of conflicting loyalties set up by that. Both Clark Gable as the gambler and William Powell as prosecuting attorney were good, wore their parts easily and with a certain fineness of air. Leo Carillo and Nat Pendleton got along nicely, and Myrna Loy was presentable. The cast, that is to say, and also the direction, were as good as the screen play deserved; and the play had a swing to it and a brightness upon it not often found in stuff written for the screen. As a whole, the show was stirring: it could have been made better by a little more attention to character, by making the bad man not so great, the great man not so good.

"Sadie McKee" is a made-over Viña Delmar novel, and fairish as a picture. Only I wish Gene Raymond and Franchot Tone could be kept out of things like this, because they are eagle scouts. Joan Crawford helped things a little, but the main prop was Edward Arnold, who gave some very good bibbing scenes, and sympathy to the whole set-up. Sadie was a girl who got deserted by one man, then married a millionaire to save him, then left him after a bit to find the first man, who died presently, making possible a happy ending with the third man, who was already involved in the plot anyway. And that, being in execution neither particularly silly nor particularly good, is that.

"No Greater Glory" is a strange sort of film, being what might pass as a juvenile and yet not handled in a juvenile manner so much, reminding you of "The Wanderer," yet attaining nothing of its beauty. It is the screen version of Molnar's "Paul Street Boys," and is taken up with the plots and counterplots of two gangs of kids, at grips over a vacant lot. The play ends in tragedy, and throughout makes limp attempts at being a satire on war, in which capacity it is about as effective as a Chautauqua salute. It has touches of humor and large splashes of mawkishness, both of which may be credited to direction; mainly its charm comes from the boys who are in it—particularly George Breakston—and the air of grave intensity and hopeless frustration they are able to give it.

Over the latest Russian film at the New York Acme Theatre, I get a little confused. "Marionettes" parodies the trappings of the capitalist state, and with very shrewd intention; but when satire becomes as awkwardly slapstick as it does here, what have you got? There were sequences in the picture that I found enjoyable, but I could not help feeling that the production of it, though in a tradition of humor sharply alien, was not much above the level of our own Hollywood shorts, which is to say, dead level.

From the awful monotony of this genre, incidentally, "Mr. W's Little Game," featuring the heavy figure and light wit of Mr. Woollcott himself, is a blessed relief and therefore having some good work by Pat O'Brien) and "We're Not Dressing" are two big-time musicals that it is rather worth staying away from. I did not know this.

OTIS FERGUSON.

A COMMUNICATION

Markets for Machines

SIR: To anyone who knows Latin America, the theory—now rampant throughout the great industrial nations of the earth—that potential machine production has outrun human needs, is absurd to a point bordering upon insanity. The population of Latin America is upwards of 100,000,000. Most of these people live in the oxcart and donkey age with barely enough to eat, not enough to wear, and are ravaged by diseases that could be reduced at least 50 percent by adequate supplies of pure water. What is much more to the point, enough of them know this to make it possible, given a fair chance, for them to change their condition.

The trouble is caused not by machines themselves nor by their amazing output, but by the stupid and obsolete methods employed to distribute the wealth of goods they yield. Those methods can be summarized briefly: "Have you got any money? What will you trade it for? We will sell you chewing gum or locomotives, lipsticks or bridges, silk stockings or steamships. We don't give a whoop what you need. We are here to do business at a profit. And if you haven't any money we will sell you nothing." There you have the whole philosophy of hard-headed business in a nutshell. It is hard-headed to the point of being block-headed. The machine age has outstripped any such primitive philosophy, and that fact accounts for its present apparent breakdown. If once the great industrial nations find out that poverty and need can create just as good a market as cash in the bank there is not enough machine capacity in the world to supply the demand. The world population is estimated at roughly two billions, and more than half of these people have living standards actually below those of Latin America. Moreover, they are no longer ignorant of the higher standards in other parts of the world. Even if they cannot read, the cinema has brought them the news.

But how can poverty be made equal to cash in creating a market? Simply by the creation of self-liquidating debts. All debts ought to be self-liquidating anyway. The world ought by this time to be aware that most of the existing debts, which were not self-liquidating, are in default no matter how excellent the credit standing of the debtors. The creation of self-liquidating debts among people who have little money or almost none calls for the inauguration of a new deal in international business, a new deal that is at least a decade overdue. The essence of it is the new principle; let the seller rather than the buyer beware. Of what shall he beware? Why, of exactly the things the buyer has always been called upon to beware: shoddy goods, excessive prices and unreasonable terms of payment. Now let us consider some specific examples of business possibilities under this proposed new deal.

In Latin America there are dozens of small cities in need of adequate supplies of pure water. Let us suppose these

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to be able to pledge governmental credit in the form of bond issues. How, then, can one sell them a modern water works and possibly a sewer system? It can be done easily by charging each customer a monthly toll. The toll would usually be less than the customer now pays for impure water. The seller would examine the possibilities, estimate the costs, seek the necessary pledges of customers, and above all he would know his business and not make fatal mistakes nor try to sell the people ten times as much water or sewer service as they needed in the hope of a quick and greedy profit. One more thing he would do (and God only knows how that would hurt), he would include in his contract a provision that after a certain number of years the whole enterprise would become the property of the municipality in question. This is of paramount importance because it prevents the enterprise from ever passing into foreign control. But isn't this hopelessly idealistic? Not at all. I am sure, because it has already been done several times. And it has succeeded every time. Other water systems have been destroyed during feverish times, much to the distress of hard-headed business men whose contracts were iron bound and juicy because of their foresight and shrewdness. But the soft-headed idealists who permitted the recapture clause to be put over on them have never lost one of theirs.

Latin America needs hundreds of miles of short railway lines to tap districts rich in minerals or timber or cattle or some agricultural product that enjoys a steady world market. If the situation were studied by engineers whose job it was to estimate possible traffic, lowest cost of construction and necessary minimum rates, they would probably turn in a report that would make the natives think they were Santa Claus, because railroads have seldom been built on any such basis as this anywhere on earth, certainly not in our country. The building of railroads has always meant graft. But what I am discussing is a new method of finding a market for American machine products. The primary objective would be the building up of vast foreign markets for rails and cars and locomotives. If the railroad were built on that basis there would be no objection to the recapture clause. Also, it would never be a foreign enterprise itching for bombs.

Latin America needs hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of electric-light and power plants. She needs port and harbor works costing at least half a billion dollars and possibly three times that sum. She needs hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of dams for irrigation projects. She needs hundreds of small slaughter houses and cooling plants so that her own people can have good meat from their herds of cattle. If promoters seek large profits from these enterprises, as they always have, they will usually fail; most of them do.

Similarly, Latin America needs hundreds of small textile plants, wood-working machinery, canning plants by the thousands, some paper mills, some shoe machinery, and dozens of radio stations in mountainous or jungle districts [illegible] the expense of stringing telephone wire is prohibitive. [illegible] roads are needed, and no one can estimate how many [illegible]. Why shouldn't they be toll bridges for a few [illegible] But would the people willingly pay toll? Listen! [illegible]e you loaded your creaking old wagon with hides [illegible] the ford and then waited two days on account of a recent rain before you dared cross the river, and then drove twenty-five miles downstream on the opposite bank to get to the market, and sold your hides, then drove twenty-five miles up, forded the stream, and drove eighteen miles down again. Suppose also that every five or six years you lost your wagon, team and cargo of hides in the ford and nearly lost your life. Do you think you would pay a dollar to cross the steel bridge? Even if you couldn't read and write and didn't know the multiplication table, it seems to me that you might work out the mathematics of this proposition on your fingers. And even if you hated gringoes there would be no very good reason to blow up the bridge, because eventually it would be your bridge.

I have concentrated on Latin America only because I know it at first hand. The needs here outlined, I think, are worldwide needs and the conditions described are equally worldwide. Naturally one should not sell on long-term credit goods to be eaten or otherwise promptly consumed. But the goods here suggested would create self-liquidating debts. The wealth they would create would also create an enormous market for all the other kinds of goods by making possible a higher standard of living. There is no other possible way to make the machine profitable. Moreover, there should not be any other way. Modern machinery is entirely too powerful an instrument to be used any longer by selfish, willful, fools. Either it must serve mankind as a means for social betterment or it cannot be used at all. At present much of it is out of use.

New York City. CHESTER T. CROWELL.

CORRESPONDENCE

Cause for Blushing

SIR: The other day a big rancher mentioned the fact that he had received from the government a check for $11,000 for wheat he had not planted. He blushed and chuckled, like a decent man.

"How much did you pay the workers who did not plant your seed?" I asked.

He blushed some more and did not chuckle.

Why shouldn't the farmers who are paid for wheat, cotton and other crops they didn't plant, or plowed under, pay part of the money received to the wage workers who didn't plant the seed and didn't or will not harvest the crop? In a workers' republic the check would have gone all to the wage workers who did not work and the landlords would have got nothing.

But then a workers' republic would not have to limit the crops—not while workers need food.

Carmel, Calif. LINCOLN STEFFENS.

Revolutionary Conspiracy

SIR: Reading Volume II of "Men of Good Will" I have wondered if any level-headed revolutionaries have been given to pause by the mode of action roughly sketched on pages 362 to 368. While it may be that Romains means to throw an ironical light on this point of view later on, it is somewhat original, and bold enough to challenge thoughtful attention.

Los Angeles, Calif. CHARLES BARRETT HOLMES.

[Romains suggests in these pages a secret revolutionary society modeled after the Jesuits or the European Freemasons, its object being to prevent war by assassinating the leading war-makers.—

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objection to them in practice is that, even if we put aside all our human sympathies with the victims of such plots, we find that the plots themselves *don't work,* and usually benefit the other side. —THE EDITORS.]

Gary Sees Pink

SIR: Early in March the writer was invited by the Gary League of Women Voters to deliver a public lecture in the Horace Mann School of Gary, Indiana, on April 23 on "Left and Right Dictatorships: Communism and Fascism in Europe." Shortly before Dr. Wirt's return from Washington, Mrs. S. S. Underwood, chairman of the national-defense study group of the Gary chapter of the D.A.R., as "a citizen and taxpayer," protested against allowing public buildings to be used for "a speaker representing interests openly advocating the overthrow of our government," and made public the following allegations against the lecturer, whom she described as a "parlor pink":

1. That he is a member of the Friends of the Soviet Union.
2. That he is a Communist, "basing that opinion on what J. [*sic*] Hamilton Fish said a few days ago, that all the officers of the Soviet Union and a majority of the Friends of the Soviet Union were Communists."
3. That he was a lecturer in the Chicago Communist Workers' School in 1933.
4. That the American Society for Cultural Relations with Russia, under whose auspices the lecturer conducted a tour to the Soviet Union in 1933, is a "Communist subsidiary."
5. That he endorsed a Communist candidate for alderman.
6. That he is a sponsor of the Chicago Communist Theatre, which gives "vile and smutty" revolutionary plays.

All of these allegations were without any foundation in fact whatever. On April 19, the day of Dr. Wirt's return to Gary, President P. W. Seyl of the Gary School Board, and Mr. L. I. Combs, a member of the Board, without making the slightest effort to ascertain the truth or falsity of Mrs. Underwood's charges, invoked a rule passed last fall, forbidding the use of school auditoriums to all "red" or "pink" speakers, and held that the Horace Mann auditorium could not be used for the lecture. Dr. Wirt, who was present at the time and who dominates his Board completely, said subsequently, "I don't know anything about the transaction." On the following day Mrs. A. F. Hadley, president of the Gary League, and Mrs. Oliver Starr, former president, authoritatively denied the D.A.R. charges and appealed to Dr. Wirt to reverse the Board's ruling. Dr. Wirt dodged responsibility by referring them to the Board, which refused to change its decision.

Thanks to the kindness of Reverend James E. Foster, the lecture was finally given to a packed hall in the parish house of the Christ Episcopal Church.

Chicago, Ill. FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN.

But Burke Is an Esperantist, Too

SIR: Mr. Kenneth Burke in his interesting remarks on international languages in The New Republic of May 2 gives a wrong impression when he says that "even Esperanto, pliant and expressive as it can be, carries a large burden of inflections and affixes" which "run counter to the analytic trend of language."

Anyone who knows anything of the technique of mastering foreign languages, knows that a mastery of the roots and affixes is the key. Do you know that English has about five hundred affixes? Affixes lighten the burden of vocabulary, which is a real one. Without them many new roots are necessary.

Esperanto adds "n" to the nouns, adjectives and pronouns in the accusative case. This permits free word order as compensation. All personal verbs end in "s" with a variation of the vowel before that "s" to indicate the time or mood—"as" for present, "is" for past, "os" for future and "us" for conditional. Considering the great irregularities especially prominent in the short English verbs, this can scarcely be termed a burden.

Now that we have Basic English for those who would learn English with ease, it remains for the French to construct Basic [illegible] Basic Russian.

Profits and Depression

SIR: Congratulations on your lucid and convincing reply to the question whether profits cause depressions [The New Republic, May 9]! May I offer one further thought which is in harmony with the general tone of your editorial?

It is not profits that cause depressions, but the *struggle* for profits in a social and economic system where money-profits are a physical and mathematical impossibility.

New York City. HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD.

Major Douglas' Speech

SIR: Mr. George Novack possibly deserves thanks from the supporters of Major Douglas for his letter [The New Republic, May 9] on Major Douglas' New York lecture—in a journal which otherwise might have omitted notice of this event—but your editorial suggestion that he deserves an answer would seem to be based on an assumed necessity that personal reactions require analysis. This I do not attempt, but those of your readers who wish to make up their own minds about the lecture, despite Mr. Novack and your editorial intervention, may be referred to New Democracy, May 1, for a stenographic report under the correct title "The Evolution of Finance."

W. A. NYLAND, Executive Secretary,
New York City. The New Economics Group.

Extracts from Letters

E. F. HOWE of San Francisco asks us to consider the persistent ballyhoo of the N.R.A. regarding its claim to the abiding interest of that organization in the welfare of "the little fellow in business." "It is well to note," he writes, "the contrast in the treatment accorded the retail tobacco business and the many lines of industry operated by millionaire corporations. From the founding of the N.R.A. the tobacco trade has persistently urged the granting to them of a protective code. This has as persistently been opposed by a nationwide chain of department stores and probably by tobacco manufacturers. No code has been granted up to this date. There is no occupation in America that embraces so many 'little fellows' as this trade. They number a million or more and include a large number of women, cripples and invalids. Yet for all their numbers, the N.R.A. will not lift a finger to restrain the hundred or so of great department stores and chain stores that are murdering the tobacco trade."

Speaking as one of the persons whom Mr. Ferguson arraigns [The New Republic, May 2] because they can afford a copy of 'I Went to Pit College,'" Miss Josephine Haines, of New York City, writes to take vigorous exception.

"Granting that Miss Gilfillan was not especially thorough in her disguise, being unversed in Pinkerton tactics, probably, I fail to find any reference to 'mysterious grounds' for not strewing banknotes about on leaving. If she had mentioned private charities of that sort, would she not be open to a charge of complacent patronage? For my own part I should judge that Miss Gilfillan had made a most liberal return for the 'pitiful hospitality' she accepted if her book had done no more than to emphasize this controversy: 'They can be *clean.* A cake of soap costs five cents.' 'They can*not* be clean! *A cake of soap costs five cents.*'"

Max Held of New York City writes that he has "figured out a plan to convince even President Roosevelt and his entire brain trust that the overproduction isn't the fault of the depression. It is the fault of the lack of confidence and loss of purchasing power. If the government would set up a fund of $1,00,000,000 not as charity, but for loans, this would relieve the entire trouble. No other remedy will help. The government must have f[illegible] the public, and help with loans to the middle class, to b[illegible] to industries and to the employed. Loans should be run [illegible] $250 and $500 for the employed and from $1,000 to $5, more, for industries, on a five-year plan to be paid off

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Two Slavery Books[1]

THERE are undoubtedly persons who, as well as being hot about the race-problem in our midst, would like also to be informed as to its background. They are not too numerous, but they can read. I wish more of them could write.

"Plantation Slavery in Georgia" is a good, sound book. Its general technical basis is that established and secured by Ulrich Phillips, who showed how to investigate such material; and reassured Southern people—or shall we say, alas, Southern scholars or researchers—by getting the Pulitzer Prize. Mr. Sydnor's book affords a pattern of the richest suggestion.

In choosing Mississippi Mr. Sydnor has as a basis for the discussion or record of the slavery system the most complete instance. When Mississippi became United States territory toward the end of the eighteenth century, there were 5,000 whites, 3,000 slaves. Then cotton, instead of indigo or tobacco, became the staple. The Whitney gin was reproduced in Mississippi from a drawing brought by a traveler, in 1795; slave labor became the great factor in the situation. The crest of the development of this leading state of the Deep South was around 1830 to 1840. In a space of a mere fifty years, from the beginning of the century to 1860, Mississippi presented the full, as Dryden would say of music, passions and Saint Cecilia, "diapason" of the slavery times. Mississippi of all the Southern states grew most cotton; it had almost the greatest number of slaves; it represented the full condition of buying from older states like Virginia, and included the entire problem of what slavery was to be and how dealt with. In 1860 the census showed slave property in Mississippi to the amount of $349,478,800, valuing the slaves, that is, at $800 apiece, which is a conservative estimate.

This excellent book has in it the possibility of giving to anyone who really wants to know, the scope and foundation of the slave system. Slavery dwindled in Virginia, where in many cases it was little more needed than among New Englanders, who soon discovered its working impossibilities. The cotton country along the Mississippi absorbed for a time any number of slaves; the entire system and policy of slave-holding was for sixty years discussed there, experimented with, and finally broken down by the War Between the States.

The mere list of contents of Professor Sydnor's book will suffice to show how useful it might be. There is first a map of the state showing "the relation of distribution of slaves to soil areas in 1850," from counties where there were 35 percent or less of slaves to counties where there were over 65 percent. The chapter divisions indicate the material. They are: work; clothing, food and shelter; physical and social care; plantation and police control of slaves; punishments and rewards; fugitives; buying, selling and hiring; profitableness of slavery; the Mississippi Colonization Society; contemporary opinions of slavery. There is not space enough even to list the many points under these headings, though some of the following may give an idea of the book's value. Approximately half the slaves in Mississippi were controlled by overseers. A large amount of whipping indicated a poorly run plantation. In diverse newspapers there were published each week what were known as "Runaway Registers"; The Woodville Republican, for example, included a description of every runaway slave in jail within the states of Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas and Illinois. Forty-four runaways were included in the first issue of this register. There are records of how the slaves were brought down from Virginia and elsewhere to be sold in these cotton states and how the value of slaves varied with the price cotton brought.

The most interesting section of this book for those who already know something of slavery conditions is the chapter on the Colonization Societies whose purpose was to send Negroes, free Negroes, back to Africa. This society, both in its national organization and its local branches, reached its peak in development by 1840. Governors of Mississippi, rich planters and people making their wills, had expressed their doubts practically or their horror spiritually of slavery as an institution. Many shiploads of Negroes were sent off to Liberia, sometimes successfully, sometimes not. This was when the Natchez and Mississippi River country was what amounted to the state itself. In 1832 twenty-nine counties were created from lands that the Choctaws and Chickasaws had been forced out of by the United States government, and in that decade the population of the state more than doubled. In this new region the land was less fertile. A Jacksonian democracy arrived. The most illuminating section of the book is this record of how an aristocratic section that freely admitted the evils of slavery was outvoted by a democratic section whose political leaders denied any imperfections in the institution. In a way this was a forerunner of the solid South that we all know of. It meant a defense, sometimes half-false, of slavery which culminated in political impasses and which put some of the best minds in the South at a disadvantage. They tried to justify from outside attack what they did not themselves quite endorse. The study of Professor Sydnor's book is made worth while by this single phase alone; for one of the main issues in the race-problem is the Negro's relation to small farmers and poor whites and his competition with the white working class. Among the planter aristocracy the question of free Negroes, slavery, Liberia, with the efforts, contributions and consciences, is one thing; when we come to the democracy it is another.

As a comment on the data of this volume, much of it taken from plantation bookkeeping and diaries, and from local newspapers of the time, and therefore accurate and easy, we might look up some of Lincoln's ideas on the subject. In his Inaugural Address he declared that he had no intention of interfering with the institution of slavery, since there was no constitutional right to do so. The famous Emancipation Proclamation in January, 1863, freed only the slaves in seceded states. He opposed universal Negro suffrage. It was this brand of thinking, perhaps, that led the great Emerson, when news came of Lincoln's assassination, to suggest, in a public address, that a wise destiny had removed him.

STARK YOUNG

[1] Plantation Slavery in Georgia, by R. B. Flanders. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 326 pages. $3.50.
Slavery in Mississippi, by Charles S. Sydnor. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 270 pages. $3.50.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

More About Neglected Books

WHAT is a neglected book anyway? When one compares the vast potential audience of readers with the few thousands who actually buy a good novel, or the hundreds who buy a volume of good contemporary poems, one is tempted to say that any book worth reading at all is at present neglected. But that wasn't what we had in mind when we asked some thirty novelists and critics to send us lists of the good books that almost nobody has read. We weren't thinking of some future day when serious novels will perhaps be printed in editions of five or ten million copies and every factory worker will have a library. We were thinking of the conditions prevailing here and now, and of the good books which for some reason failed to reach the present audience that would normally be expected to buy, read and enjoy them.

A first group of selections was printed in the issue of April 18 and aroused a great deal more interest than we expected. Here are some additional selections, more from critics, this time, than from novelists.

Newton Arvin says that our query makes him realize "how little 'current literature' I manage to get read, and how much of what I do read is either negligible (deserving the oblivion into which it falls) or so distinguished that it continues over several years to be recognized and discussed. I am sure that there is a third type, the type you speak of; but I imagine it is only the people who really keep up with things who are able to speak of it knowingly. However, I will make out a list of the books *more or less* of this sort that occur to me":

> "Tall Tales of the Southwest," by Franklin J. Meine (Knopf, 1930). A fine collection of passages from old humorists.
>
> "The United States Since 1865," by Louis M. Hacker and B. B. Kendrick (Crofts, 1932). A history that seems to tell the truth about the era.
>
> "Strike," by Mary Heaton Vorse (Liveright, 1930). Not a perfect novel, but one that surely deserves to be kept going.
>
> Spokesmen," by T. K. Whipple (Appleton, 1928). Good essays on Dreiser, Anderson, Robinson and others.
>
> "John Calvin: The Man and His Ethics," by Georgia Harkness (Holt, 1931). A biography very intelligently written in a spirit close to Marxism.

In addition to these, Arvin mentions three books that appeared on other lists: Wallace Stevens' "Harmonium," Constance Rourke's "American Humor" and Robert Cantwell's "Laugh and Lie Down." He also thinks highly of "Art in America," by Suzanne La Follette, but this, strictly speaking, is no longer a neglected book. It has been reprinted in the White Oak Library (Norton), a new series which aims to keep alive and find new readers for valuable but not necessarily popular books of non-fiction.

Mary M. Colum writes that somewhere in the back of her mind are the names of other good books lost in the shuffle, but "the only two that I know much about are Hart Crane's 'Collected Poems' (Liveright, 1933) and Stephen Vincent Benét's 'John Brown's Body' (Doubleday, Doran, 1928). I am staggered to hear from you that Hart Crane has been remaindered, but very few people understand poetry unless it is read aloud to them. . . .

" 'The Saint and Mary Kate' is one of the best Irish novels of recent years, and in addition is very amusing and humorous. I can't understand why it has got lost, when all sorts of silly and trashy Irish novels have been boomed. It seems to me sometimes that the best books get the most ignorant reviews. The worst of it is that there are too many reviewers, where there ought to be just a few who know their business."

Robert M. Coates mentions the following titles:

> "After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie," by Jean Rhys (Knopf, 1931). A novel not widely read but distinctly out of the ordinary.
>
> "The Making of Americans" (Harcourt, 1934)—which, in spite of being Gertrude Stein's finest and greatest work, doesn't seem to be getting very far in this country.
>
> "Life Among the Lowbrows," by Eleanor Rowland Wembridge (Houghton, 1931). A tremendously illuminating inquiry into the minds of the semi-moronic.
>
> "The Horror of It" (Harcourt, 1932). War photographs and, in spite of the sentimental text, terribly effective.

Coates also calls attention to five books that appeared on other lists: "The American Jitters," "Laugh and Lie Down," "The Collected Poems of Hart Crane," "The Little Golden Calf." And he mentions one book that I wish had appeared oftener: "Towards a Better Life," by Kenneth Burke (Harcourt, 1932), a short novel composed of epistles or "declamations." Perhaps the unusual form of it was what frightened readers away; if they read to the end they would find that it reaches a pitch of intensity very rare in recent fiction.

Clifton Fadiman, Coates's successor as book reviewer for The New Yorker, sends in a very different list, which includes only one book mentioned by any other of our correspondents. But this is partly explained by the fact that Fadiman goes back farther into the past:

> Olaf Stapledon's "Last and First Men" (P. Smith). A magnificent philosophical fantasy which the reviewers appreciated but the public missed.
>
> Rudolph Brunngraber's "Karl and the Twentieth Century" (Morrow, 1933). Probably the most intelligent piece of fiction out of Central Europe in the last few years.
>
> J. W. N. Sullivan's "Beethoven: His Spiritual Development" (Knopf, 1927). A great book on Beethoven and a great book on music.
>
> Sigfrid Siwertz's "Down Stream" (Knopf, 1923). This is the most remarkable study of family disintegration I have ever read. It did not deserve to die.
>
> "Mary Lee," by Geoffrey Dennis, originally published by Knopf (1922). Admirers of Dennis have been whooping him up for almost a decade here without making much of an impression on the public. He is a minor writer, but a remarkable minor writer.

Harry Hansen of The New York World-Telegram goes still farther into the past for his list of books now "little read and worth reading." Many of those he mentions are

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"House of the Fighting Cock," by Henry Baerlein (Harcourt, 1923).

"The Adventures of a Supercargo," which can probably be obtained in the complete works of Louis Becke, published by Lippincott.

"The Cat and the Cherub and Other Tales," by Chester B. Fernald (Century, 1901).

"The Fugitive Blacksmith," by Charles D. Stewart (Century, 1905).

"The Master of the Inn," by Robert Herrick (Scribner's, 1908).

"The Autobiography of a Beggar," by I. K. Friedman (Small, Maynard, 1903).

"The Revolution in Tanner's Lane," by Mark Rutherford, first published in the 1880's, but later reprinted.

Robert Cantwell, whose first book, "Laugh and Lie Down," was mentioned five times—oftener, that is, than any other of the neglected novels—begins by listing two volumes dealing with Ireland: Séan O'Faoláin's "Midsummer Night Madness" (Viking, 1932) and R. W. Postgate's "Dear Robert Emmet" (Vanguard, 1932). The first of these, a volume of short stories, received very little attention until O'Faoláin's novel, "A Nest of Simple Folk," began to be praised so widely. The second is a biography by an English Socialist and scholar who knows a tremendous lot about Irish history, the theory of revolutions and the activities in Ireland of British secret agents.

"Now let me think," Cantwell continues. "Do you want to go back as far as 1922? There's S. E. Morison's 'Maritime History of Massachusetts' which I've been reading. It's a beauty. And there's 'Bill Haywood's Book' (International, 1929) if you want to get into valuable neglected documents. I also liked Edwin Muir's 'The Three Brothers' (Doubleday, 1931)."

Lewis Gannett of The New York Herald Tribune asks, "Am I too late"—he isn't—"to recall John Evans' 'Andrew's Harvest' (Morrow, 1933), Steinbeck's 'Pastures of Heaven' (Harcourt, 1932), Agnes Smedley's 'Daughter of Earth' (Coward, 1929) and Boris Savinkov's 'Memoirs of a Terrorist' (Boni, 1931)?"—Three of these are first-novels, a type of book quite likely to be overlooked by the public. "Daughter of Earth" was also mentioned by John Dos Passos, who incidentally got the name of it wrong.

But there was another and graver blunder among the original lists of "Good Books That Almost Nobody Has Read"—a blunder that I don't greatly regret because it can be corrected now and because it was the occasion for a lot of interesting correspondence. F. Scott Fitzgerald mentioned "a book called 'Spring Flight,' by whom I've forgotten—he never appeared again." To this, after some searching through catalogues, I added the comment that "we could find no trace of 'Spring Flight' or its author—perhaps Fitzgerald remembered the wrong title." At least fifteen people wrote in to supply the missing information; and their letters, when pieced together, give a fairly complete picture of a book, an author and a promising career in fiction that ended as soon as it began.

"The book Fitzgerald had in mind," Hartley Grattan said, "was by Lee J. Smits and was published by Knopf in 1925. Smits was a great friend of my good friend G. D. Eaton, and it was Eaton who prodded him into writing this one novel. I never met Smits—I doubt that he ever visited New York—but I can recall Eaton saying that Smits was one of the laziest people mentally he ever knew. He vastly preferred the life of a beachcomber on the waterfront at Detroit—if you can imagine such a thing—to the labor of composition. Right now I cannot recall the reviews, but I know Eaton and myself were enthusiastic and hoped 'The Spring Flight' was the first of a series of novels from Smits' pen. It runs in my mind that Mr. Knopf had the same idea and did everything possible to induce Smits to work."

Mr. Knopf has volunteered the information that "The Spring Flight" had a sale of 3,244 copies—"not so bad, really, for a first novel," but this comparative failure "so discouraged Smits that I don't think he has attempted to publish a book since." Another correspondent, H. C. Brown of The Detroit News, adds that Smits formerly worked for that paper and is now on the staff of the Hearst-owned Detroit Times. Still another correspondent, Foster Mohrhardt, of Colorado State Teachers College, says that a reading of Smits' daily column in The Times would indicate that he doesn't intend to write another book. Slowly the information about him piles up. Sol Sniderman, the editor of Point, a new literary magazine in Madison, Wisconsin, says he has heard that "The Spring Flight" is now so rare "the author himself is advertising for a copy." Paul Munter, of Brooklyn, thinks that "Its neglect is a national crime. . . . Brilliantly it traces the evolution of a half-baked, half-enlightened character in a nation suffering from arrested development. The boy stumbles along, pert, cocky, minutely disillusioned, full of American nonchalance and gullibility (especially as regards women); he contracts disease, tries this and that enterprise and finally settles down in his groove with a wife somewhat his senior. The book cannot die. Some day it will be recognized as what it is—the American 'Pendennis.'"—It seems to me that the author of an American "Pendennis" ought to change his mind and write another novel; it might be an American "Vanity Fair."

The theme suggested by the story of Smits' novel—that is, the effect produced on a talented author by the failure of a book on which he had placed his hopes—is elaborated in a letter from Nathan Asch. It is too bad, he thinks, that the books already listed have not had a large sale, "but essentially you could not say that most of them have been neglected. Poets expect to be neglected, books on philosophy have a specialized audience, and translations are a by-product on which the author hardly ever counts. . . . But American novelists must live on the American public. These four must have been considerably discouraged, and they are so good that the development of the American novel may have been retarded by their failure to find more readers":

John Herrmann: "Summer Is Ended" (Covici-Friede, 1932). Love and the acquisitive instinct develop side by side, with damage to love.

Ivan Beede: "Prairie Women" (Harpers, 1930). The effect of the Nebraska sun and storms and plains on the descendants of the pioneers.

Fielding Burke: "Call Home the Heart" (Longman's, 1932). This is the best proletarian novel I have read in any language.

Paul Green: "The Laughing Pioneer" (McBride, 1932). This book is a phenomenon; it is a very beautifully written story of love today, shattered by the inequality of class.

And Asch continues, "Of these four writers, all true novelists, I know what three are doing: one writes synopses for the movies, one has become a subsistence farmer, and one has gone to Hollywood and writes scenarios there." It isn't only the neglected books that are lost, but also, in many cases, the still better books by the same authors that

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Rackety Jackets

Finnley Wren, by Philip Wylie. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

James Shore's Daughter, by Stephen Vincent Benét. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

Doctor Martino and Other Stories, by William Faulkner. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. $2.50.

The Reckoning, by Leane Zugsmith. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. $2.50.

The Unpossessed, by Tess Slesinger. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.50.

PUBLISHERS and book-reviewers do not always live together in amity, but they unite in defense of their common racket, and hate to have it called by that ugly name. The book game (if that is a prettier word) is certainly not so crooked as municipal politics, bootlegging or professional wrestling. But it is crooked.

Take the matter of book jackets. The great majority of books published in America today are literally clothed in lies. The publisher's cynical defense is that nobody but a sucker takes the jacket seriously; in a country where advertising has reached its present pitch of mendacious insanity, he is forced to do as everyone else does, and cry his wares at the top of his lungs and beyond the bounds of reason, in order to be heard at all. We are approaching a situation—if indeed we have not already reached it—in which everyone pretends to fool everybody else. This may be fun, but it is moral insanity. The poor publishers are simply as bewildered as any other business men, though they take a more mystical view of profit and loss. They know they are going to lose on some books, though they hope to make money on all; from time to time they bet heavily on a lucky number. But in each case, like an anxious father with an embarrassing number of daughters, the publisher whispers: "Go, little book!" and without batting an eye shouts to the polygamous public: "Here comes the bride!" Sometimes he is able to bully the parties concerned into a shotgun wedding; sometimes, to his delighted surprise, the pair take to each other at sight; but alas, too often the willing sacrifice is abandoned at the altar.

These five books of fiction were not chosen as horrible examples of tricked-out shoddy goods—far from it. But they will serve to illustrate our argument. Here, for instance, is a much ballyhooed novel entitled: "Finnley Wren, His Notions and Opinions, together with a Haphazard History of His Career and Amours in these Moody Years, as well as Sundry Rhymes, Fables, Diatribes and Literary Misdemeanors." This mock-archaicism is self-conscious and a little sophomoric, but we cannot blame the publisher for an author's subtitle. This is what the publisher says about it:

> *At Last.* A Book in the spirit of Sterne and Rabelais. A Book Written Purely for Amusement—A Novel in a New Manner. . . . Here is a book so full of the diverse qualities of humanity, so full of whim, brilliance, fancy, realism, horror and fulmination that it bursts beyond its confines and creates a form entirely its own . . . written with intense economy. . . . The story is more than dramatic—it is an exhilarating experience. It courses through the entire range of human intelligence from roaring humor to volcanic horror and covers an army of people and a procession of contemporary events as the author listens, bemused. . . .

The publisher is trying to sell patent medicine. (Or is he?) But isn't it lucky that readers pay no attention to this high-pressure sales talk? If they did, they might find themselves a little confused or chagrined when it came to reconciling the sideshow with the barker. For of course "Finnley Wren" fulfills none of the grandiose claims made for it. It is as much in the spirit of Sterne and Rabelais (what a combination!) as this review is in the spirit of Carlyle and Cervantes. It obviously was not written purely for amusement; its "new manner" strongly resembles an old notebook. As for its "humanity, whim, brilliance, roaring humor, volcanic horror," etc., they are all chimerical—semaphored with sophomoric violence, but with the signals mixed. The hero, Finnley Wren, is a New York advertising man who passes in these pages for an original, a desperate liver and a bold thinker, a fine flower of intelligent and lusty manhood. The whole thing is undergraduate and—in Dashiell Hammett language—screwy, but there are enough bedroom-and-bar scenes to keep the reader going.

Mr. Wylie has for some years knocked violently at the door of Literature, but it has not opened to him. That is certainly no crime. But when he allows a publisher's legerdemain (which does sometimes fool part of the audience) to give the illusion that he is another Aladdin, then he is compounding a felony. To give him his due, Mr. Wylie is himself under no illusions about what kind of book he has written. The last words on the blurb—which give a fillip of cynical honesty to the whole farrago—are his: "But since I felt so certain that all writing nowadays is myopic twaddle, I had no hesitation in writing some twaddle of my own." If Mr. Wylie really feels that way about modern fiction, what the devil is he doing in that galley?

Compared to "Finnley Wren's," the jackets of these other novels are sober-sided indeed. Mr. Stephen Vincent Benét's "James Shore's Daughter" is merely "the most curious and carelessly powerful book since 'The Professor's House' . . . a finely reasoned novel about love, a book which touches with new beauty that lost passion of youth which every one secretly expects to find again. It is the book of a poet which sends us back to the deepest fountains of our national life and of our secret personal experience." Still, I defy any Martian visitor to gather from this description that "James Shore's Daughter" is a pleasantly sentimental excursion into the last century, when self-made millionaires, brownstone palaces and things-in-general were somehow more glamorous than they are now. Except for a feebly unconvincing finish, it is a good second-rate novel. And the publishers of William Faulkner's latest collection of short stories have found little to add about an author who is almost too much in the public eye except that: "This volume represents a distinct advance in Mr. Faulkner's work." The statement (unless it is meant quantitatively) is obviously untrue: there are only three good stories in the book, out of fourteen. Why not simply say: Here are more Faulkner stories, some of them very good?

According to its blurb, Miss Zugsmith's "The Reckoning" is written "with astonishing insight into human nature and is one of the most absorbing novels that have been written about New York." The first statement is a gratuitous insult to the author; the second might almost qualify for the "Ho-hum" department of The New Yorker. "The Reckoning" is an impressive piece of work, the fourth novel of an author whose insight into human nature does not astonish me in the slightest degree: it is clearly the result of observation, intelligence and feeling. It is one of those case-history studies of life on the under side of a great city that might easily have been as depressing, as bereft of hu-

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manity, as a probation officer's report. On the contrary, "The Reckoning" is very nearly a first-rate novel.

Perhaps luckily for my argument, the jacket that covered "The Unpossessed" has disappeared. Let us give it the benefit of the doubt, and assume that it was studded with modest understatements. But Miss Slesinger's is a first novel of such extraordinary promise that its promoters might have been forgiven for indulging in a few anticipatory hurrahs. Here again the subject is neither fresh nor savory, but Miss Slesinger has whipped it into a very lively semblance. For the first hundred pages "The Unpossessed" seems uninspired by anything more vital than the shopworn big talk, inverted feelings and cramped impotence that pass, among the second-rate intelligentsia, for the state of being alive. But if you can survive the slight nausea induced by this too-familiar ferry ride, you will soon begin to feel much better. As the story draws away from the Greenwich Village skyline, a saltier breeze begins to blow. In such scenes as the conferences over the long-gestating Magazine that is to bring all the squabbling factions together, and the disastrously mixed party that heralds its still-birth, Miss Slesinger shows herself an able fomenter of crowds. She is plausible, if not profound, with the woman who denies her birthright for a mess of masculine pottage, the professor whose nerveless honesty keeps him in cap-and-bells, the lost girl who insists on being Beatrice, even though it means being unhappily drunk most of the time. The less serious performers are made up a little too heavily for anything but burlesque.

This uncertainty, this uneasy farce, is the essence of "The Unpossessed"; its intention is not purely satirical, but its effect is more satirical than anything else. In its conscious sentimentality, its conscious self-mockery, in its fundamental unwillingness to be content with either, this novel is authentically of our day.

To clinch my thesis, it only remains for the publisher to accuse me of having written a misleading blurb. (Reviewers and publishers are really in cahoots.)

T. S. MATTHEWS.

"Father's Ideas"

The Elder Henry James, by Austin Warren. New York: The Macmillan Company. 285 pages. $2.50.

"FATHER'S IDEAS"—such were the terms in which the members of his interesting family were in the habit of alluding affectionately to the speculations of the elder Henry James; and, so far as the American public of his time alluded to them at all, it was in much the same vein of amused toleration. Yet the man cannot be disposed of as a gifted and amiable eccentric: it is true that on the surface he was mainly an expounder of Swedenborg and Fourier, and that, to the present generation, he might almost as well have spent his life expounding Muggleton and Etienne Cabet; but an inch below the surface he was no more truly a mere Swedenborgian than he was a mere Fourierite. He was a social critic of remarkable, though disappointingly limited, insight; and he not only prophesied the coming of a genuine social equality, but administered a dreadful beating to the crazy individualism of his age. Moreover, as his small sons decided to explain to their confrères, curious to account for what everyone's father "did," he "wrote"; he was one of the liveliest prose writers in American literature in fact, and Mr. Warren's book would have performed a real service if it were only for the passages he quotes f[illegible]

As an exposition of James's thought, the book is far more than a mere string of quotations; and as a sketch of the man's highly engaging personality, it is sensitive, temperate and true. It could be wished that Mr. Warren had associated James and his ideas more closely, at every point, with the history of American politics and business in the middle of the century: his not doing so keeps an admirable biography from being quite as dynamic as the subject deserves to be made.

NEWTON ARVIN.

Thinking About Pictures

Art Now, by Herbert Read. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 144 pages and 128 plates. $3.75.

THERE are a great many people who would really like to know what the so-called "modern" artists are driving at; who look at a canvas by Rouault, an abstraction by Picasso, a triumph in abstract form by Brancusi, and wonder what this thing is that differs so radically in its superficial appearance from the great works of the past and yet lays claim, in all its strangeness, to the same consideration. For such bewildered folk Professor Read's book should be useful. I rather hope it may fall into the hands of an elderly gentleman whom I encountered last summer in the Modern Museum, examining Rouault's pictures with the absorbed interest of a connoisseur, and who astonished me by turning to me suddenly with an air of comical distress and the confession, "I can't make a thing out of them."

Not that I believe Professor Read's learned discussion of the science, philosophy and psychology of modern art will help the untutored reader to grasp the significance of the photographic reproductions with which his book is copiously illustrated. There is only one way to enjoyment of graphic and plastic art, and that is the way of direct experience. It is quite as absurd to expect to come to love pictures or sculptures through reading what writers on esthetics say about them as to expect to love poetry or music by the same means. But if such books as his help their readers to look at works of art with their eyes rather than with their preconceptions or their prejudices, they accomplish all that may be expected of them. The label "subjective idealism," attached to a work of Picasso, probably would not greatly increase the joy of the beholder; but it might open his mind to the possible validity of a kind of painting that has no perceptible relation to conventional notions of what constitutes significance in art.

Professor Read elucidates the changing views on this subject, from the decay of the classical ideal in the eighteenth century to the ultra-modern teaching of the Surrealists that "it is the function of art . . . to snatch things from the security of their normal existence and put them where they have never been before, except in dreams." Art today, he says, is characterized as never before by diversity, and that diversity

> . . . is discontinuous, and cannot be made to fit into any one theoretical concept; but we can find a parallel for most of its aspects in the history of art. The novelty is, that these aspects, these concepts of art, have never before existed side by side, within one another, at one and the same time.

Does this discontinuous diversity mean that we have reached the end of an epoch—of a culture, as Spengler would have it? Professor Read refuses to make any such

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with relation to anything except philosophy and psychology. His resolute disregard of the social setting is his own affair, of course; but it has the effect of making art appear as something existing *in vacuo,* and thus of limiting the interest of his book—and possibly the validity of some of his analysis. And it makes positively tantalizing such challenging statements as, "But if we examine the matter historically we shall be forced to admit that never since the Baroque period has art served any social or cultural purpose." It also makes him appear a bit arrogant in dismissing as a "vulgar error" the idea "that art can be economically determined." A pretty good case could be made for this "vulgar error"—into which Professor Read comes dangerously near falling when he speaks of the realism of Beckman, Dix and Grosz as "partly a social protest, but a protest intensified by the experience of the War." But possibly he doesn't think that social conditions, including war, have anything to do with economics.

SUZANNE LA FOLLETTE.

Road Map

The Choice Before Us, by Norman Thomas. New York: The Macmillan Company. 249 pages. $2.50.

THOSE who, after reading the President's "On Our Way," are still tempted to repeat the question which he neglected to answer—"On our way to what?"—may turn with profit to this volume by one of his defeated opponents. In fact, even more profitably, they might turn to Mr. Thomas's book before reading the President's. For Mr. Thomas has a clear idea of where we are, of where we are going and of where we ought to go—which are all matters of considerably more importance than the mere fact, indisputable though it may be, that we are going somewhere.

"The Choice Before Us" opens with a vivid contrast between that hoped-for world which was to be created by the "war to end war" and the actual world which has resulted; in which more money is spent on war preparation than ever before, the United States leading—with our famous Kellogg Pact outlawing, as Mr. Thomas well says, not war but declarations of war; in which, the United States again leading, the reactionary policy of economic nationalism is acclaimed; in which, once more the United States leading, "we have invented a new and most bitter type of poverty"—poverty caused by overabundance.

> No satirist ever penned such an indictment of a cruel and lunatic order of society as was written by the author of the Agricultural Adjustment Act in America who saw no way to restore a partial prosperity to farmers except to produce an artificial scarcity by paying agricultural producers from the proceeds of a tax on consumers to destroy the abundance of foodstuffs which men had struggled thousands upon thousands of years to create. And this, be it remembered, in the midst of a cold and hungry world.

This is the point to which the breakdown of competitive capitalism has brought us. What Roosevelt's policy is doing, according to Mr. Thomas's careful analysis, is to bolster up monopolistic capitalism in both industry and agriculture at the expense of the consumer, the laborer, the small tradesman and the small farmer. We have already arrived, under the present administration, at a form of state capitalism. Will this mild substitute for fascism prevent the growth of When the "forgotten man" of the lower middle class realizes how badly he has been sold out, he will be ready to embrace the demagoguery of some would-be dictator of the Huey Long variety, and the era of violence will set in. Provided, that is, that in the period of respite still allowed us no united radical party arises to prevent it.

Mr. Thomas is almost equally critical of the non-revolutionary tactics of the German Social Democrats and the divisive tactics of the Communists. Speaking for a much less doctrinaire Socialism than the Hillquit type, he advocates a united front between Socialists and Communists, at least on questions that do not involve the authority of the Third International, he stresses the need to radicalize the A.F. of L., he emphasizes the necessity of a unified farmer-labor-white-collar party based on a recognition of their common position as workers. Whenever such a radical party actually obtains control of the government, he shows in the last chapter, the socialization of industry can be carried out in America with great ease and a minimum of disturbance. Will the needed strong radical party be created in time to save us? The outlook is dark, but Mr. Thomas does not despair. The choice, he insists, is still before us.

ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES.

Books in Brief

BIOGRAPHY

BEETHOVEN AS HE LIVED, by Richard Specht. *Translated by Alfred Kalisch. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. 349 pages. $3.*

This is an irritating book, and for reasons that are worth explaining. It is an attempt, in the author's own words, to "breathe life into the Beethoven of plaster, or, if you wish, of marble." The sources on which it draws are the same that earlier biographers have used, particular attention being paid to Beethoven's conversation books, to anecdotes and reminiscences and contemporary memoirs, and to oral tradition, especially in so far as all these throw light on Beethoven's personal eccentricities. But it happens that these eccentricities, without the genius that justified them, seem pitiable and ridiculous. Specht, though full of hero worship, isn't able to convey his hero's genius, with the result that his Beethoven, instead of appearing as the great composer, becomes the hero of a Silly Symphony.

M. G.

GEORGE LEWES AND GEORGE ELIOT, by Anna T. Kitchel. *New York: The John Day Company. 321 pages. $2.50.*

Now that George Eliot's reputation has faded a little, the intellectual achievement of her first husband becomes more apparent. In his own day Lewes was felt to be something of an outlander in English culture; now we can see that he was one of the most civilized men of Victorian England. Of humble origin and self-educated, he seems to have acquired from his plebeian-Bohemian background a realism and a freedom from intellectual mannerism that were rare enough among the literary minds more formally trained in his time. He practised many arts and disciplines. He was a mediocre actor, a bad novelist (yet interesting in his treatment of philosophic ideas in terms of emotional action) and a poor playwright. As a critic, however, he was excellent; he understood and expounded Goethe perhaps better than any other man in England and, with Huxley, was one of the few to respond to Goethe's scientific message, which the literary men liked to ignore; he attacked Bardolatry before Matthew Arnold and Bernard Shaw; he mastered several foreign literatures and preached the lessons to be learned from them to the insular writers of England; he was perhaps first in England to call "Moby Dick" a very great book; and his theatrical criticism is the best of his time. His work on philosophy, though not profound, has been said to have had as great an influence in his time as Mill's "Logic"; he spread the knowledge of Spinoza in

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modern standards was above reproach, and his behavior to his faithless first wife was a model of decency and wisdom. Miss Kitchel's study, though useful, is confessedly summary; Lewes deserves a more extensive biography—which Miss Kitchel herself is well equipped to do. L. T.

Public Questions

ARMS AND THE MEN, by the editors of Fortune. *Garden City: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 59 pages. 10 cents.*

This is a reprint of Fortune's fine article on the armaments makers—Zaharoff, Schneider, Krupps, the Wendels and others whose road is considerably spattered with blood. The pamphlet isn't sold at the book stores, but anybody can get a copy of it by sending ten cents to the publishers at Garden City, Long Island.

The Social Sciences

CRIME, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCE, by Jerome Michael and Mortimer J. Adler. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method.* 469 *pages.* $3.50.

This volume contains the principal results of a survey made for the Bureau of Social Hygiene for the purpose of deciding on the advisability of establishing in this country an Institute of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Part I is an analysis of the nature and the problems of crime; Part II is an extensive critique of the present status of "criminology," together with numerous illuminating case records bearing on anti-social behavior. In Part III the authors, who have already undermined most of the pretenses of the so-called "science," discuss criminal justice and criminal law. The concluding part carries an extensive body of recommendations regarding the proposed Institute. In view of the authors' previous plea for scientific knowledge in the field of criminology, it is rather surprising that the staff recommendations for such an Institute make no provision for chemical, biochemical or biological experts, and that its activities should avoid all contact with the vulgarities of actual police practice. Not even schools of journalism can preserve their students from the contamination of newspaper work. H. W.

THE ETHICS OF SEXUAL ACTS, by René Guyon. *Translated by J. C. and Ingeborg Flugel, with an Introduction by Norman Haire. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.* 432 *pages.* $4.

A lengthy and somewhat dull exposition of the thesis that everything sexual is good, *per se.* The English title is an unfortunate mistranslation, as the book is written from a completely amoral viewpoint. M. Guyon, who believes that sex should be removed from the sphere of ethics and placed in that of physiology, expounds a mechanistic theory of sexuality whereby any process yielding sexual satisfaction is as good as any other and the perversions are treated as natural and legitimate phenomena. There is a complete disregard for all social values, which are lumped together as "anti-sexual taboo" and reviled prolixly. The author is widely read and develops his thesis with considerable intellectual force, but he betrays a narrowness of vision and a strong unconscious bias that cause him to misinterpret much of his source material—particularly in the realm of psychoanalysis, which he draws upon extensively—and will render his conclusions suspect to most readers. E. H. G.

THE METHOD AND THEORY OF ETHNOLOGY: An Essay in Criticism, by Paul Radin. *New York: The McGraw-Hill Publishing Company.* 293 *pages.* $2.50.

Professional anthropologists will run the whole gamut of annoyance at Paul Radin's rattling of many skeletons in their closets. But a "science" that cannot take criticism is vulnerable indeed, and Mr. Radin's attempt to expose some of the "presuppositions" of ethnology—however temperamental and short-winded—is a practice highly to be commended. The first two chapters deal at some length with Franz Boas and his school, which stresses the importance of objective, "egalitarian" treatment of all cultures. England and the Continent are all too briefly summarized in the

"The best American novel I have read this year . . . Tom Paine and Thomas Jefferson, were they alive today (they do not seem to be), would admire *The Land of Plenty.* Unless there is some vigorous objection, I would like to nominate it for the Pulitzer Prize."—Clifton Fadiman, in *The New Yorker.*

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"A first rate novel. . . . As a tragically true story of human beings it will hit home to most men of good will."—*Time.*

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third chapter: we are told nothing of the work of the Soviet anthropologists. The latter part of the book analyzes certain problems basic to ethnology, with copious references to authorities. A final chapter on "Theoretical Ethnology"—as might be expected in so ill defined a field—substitutes a new skeleton or two for the old ones. Is it not also a dangerous "presupposition" to demand from ethnology "satisfactory knowledge of what constitutes human nature"? H. W.

Fiction

ONCE A WILDERNESS, by Arthur Pound. *New York: Reynal and Hitchcock.* $2.50.

The preface to this novel consists of a chart tracing the ancestry of every member of the Mark family since 1764, and giving the dates of the birth and death of each person listed; the only thing lacking is a mention of the "Mayflower." The Marks lived loyally together on the lands that made up the Mark Section. Their new offspring, their private scandals, their accidents, furnish the incidents in the novel. Captain John Mark, who rode into Michigan in a covered wagon and lived to ride round his domain in an automobile, is their patriarch. He is pictured as a benevolent sort of despot, whose position gives him the power and the inclination to interfere with the lives of others. When his daughter wants to marry the man she loves he prevents her. When he finds himself lusting for the wife of one of his farm hands he takes her. The author's sentimental attitude toward the Captain and his family prevents the novel from assuming any air of authenticity; as an attempt to glorify the good old American family, "Once A Wilderness" is sticky with nostalgia. J. M.

Contributors

Stephen Spender's collected poems will be published shortly by Random House. His poem in this issue was submitted in our Reichstag Fire Trial contest, the winner of which will be announced in a near issue.

Jonathan Mitchell, former newspaper man and author of "Goose Steps to Peace," has been in Washington studying the workings of the arms' lobbies.

Chester T. Crowell has done newspaper work throughout the United States and contributed fiction and articles to numerous publications.

Helen Buchalter is art critic of The Washington Daily News.

Hildegarde Flanner, a resident of California, is the author of "Time's Profile," a book of verse. She contributes verse and articles to numerous magazines and lectures on poetry in California and Mexico.

T. S. Matthews is literary editor of Time.

Newton Arvin is associate professor of English at Smith College. He is the author of many reviews and critical articles and a life of Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Suzanne La Follette, author of "Concerning Women" and "Art in America," was editor of The New Freeman.

Ernest Sutherland Bates is associate editor of The Modern Monthly. He is the author of "The Gospel According to Judas," "This Land of Liberty" and co-author of "Mary Baker Eddy: The Truth and the Tradition."

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Martha Gruening, Lionel Trilling, Harold Ward, Elizabeth H. Garrett and Jerre Mangione.

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